# THE STRAIGHT PATH

M. J. PHELAN

# THE STRAIGHT PATH;

## OR, MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

By the Rev. M. J. PHELAN, S.J.

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## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

### IRISH.

"The author marshals his arguments in stately array, and as the reader is carried along he feels the Catholic Church's claim grow more overpowering until the last lingering doubt is smothered in the grand *cumulus* of argument so prized by Newman."—*Leader.*

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# OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

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[*Continued at end of volume.*

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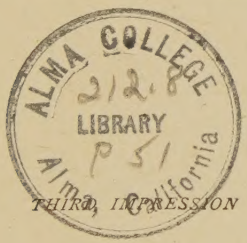
BY THE REV.

M. J. PHELAN, S.J.

AUTHOR OF "THE YOUNG PRIEST'S KEEPSAKE," ETC




THIRD IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK

BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS

1918

1999

Imprimi Potest.

A. J. MAAS, S.J.

Nihil Obstat.

J. CAÑCUS MOYES.
*Censor deputatus.*

Imprimatur.

EDMUNDUS CAN. SURMONT.
*Vic. Generalis.*

WESTMONASTERII, *die vii Decembris*, 1914.

# PREFACE.

THIS little work is conceived in no controversial spirit ; for since controversy begets bad temper more often than conviction, the idea remotest from the writer's mind would be to awaken that profitless and unholy spirit.

If, then, comparisons are instituted between the Catholic Church and other Christian bodies, the reader must bear in mind that this is done with no purpose of disrespect, but simply and solely because the exigencies of the argument demand it. Were these comparisons omitted, the reasoning would be incomplete, and halt, when it should lead to a definite conclusion.

The purpose of the book is a modest one—namely, to serve as a clear, and possibly an interesting, exposition of some points of Catholic teaching.

The child of the Church, it is hoped, will find his faith strengthened and his knowledge enlarged by its perusal ; while even if it fails to bring conviction to the mind of the non-Catholic

reader it will benefit him this much—it will throw light on many points hitherto obscure if not completely unknown ; and it will inspire respect for a Church whose claims to be the ambassador of Christ, even the most prejudiced must admit, are powerful and worthy of earnest consideration.

Should these pages serve to dispel the prejudices of even one honest mind, or lead one soul nearer to God, the author will consider himself more than rewarded for any labour it writing has entailed.

M. J. PHELAN, S.J.

Limerick, *Dec.*, 1914.

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# BOOK THE FIRST

# THE FOUR MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

# PROLOGUE.

A MAN awakening in an English city on a Sunday morning finds his ears assailed by a multitude of church bells. The very air grows vibrant with their booming, clanging and chiming. Every variety of note is here, from the deep-toned bass of the cathedral to the tinny jingle of the Methodist chapel.

He knows from experience, and if he did not Monday's papers could inform him, that this clamouring of contradictory sounds, this babel of brass tongues symbolizes, and that but feebly, the clashing doctrines and warring creeds preached from the pulpits within.

He then reflects that truth is but one; that two and two cannot be four and five at the same time, that if one out of every thirty of these churches is right the remaining twenty-nine must be wrong. Yet here he has all assuring him that they bear him one heavenly message and all at the same time contradicting one another. A spectacle indeed to furnish a scoff to

the infidel, but to the thoughtful man, anxious for his soul's salvation, saddening and bewildering in the extreme. He listens for a clear and definite voice and gets instead a din of chaotic confusion.

Here he might well despair did not two comforting thoughts come to his relief :—

1. That the true Church founded by Christ certainly exists somewhere to-day ; for He promised that it was to last throughout all time, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it.

2. That Christ was God.

Taking these two points when he proceeds to reason, the perplexing tangle vanishes and his path grows clear. This is the order in which his thoughts stand : Christ being God foresaw all things to come : unborn ages lived and palpitated before His eyes. Yes, as He stood by the lonely Galilean lake or walked the crowded city the canvas of the future was ever unrolled before His vision. He saw the supremacy of His Vicar in the Christian family of nations destroyed, the keystone in the arch of Christian unity displaced fifteen centuries after His death, as in the ninth century by the Greek schism. As He prayed through the hushed stillness of the midnight hours the discordant voices of brawling sectaries, that have maddened the world

for the past three hundred years, kept ringing in His ears. And before Him another vision also arose—the vision of honest men perplexed, lifting their hands in anguish and crying "Lord, that we may see!" "A Church You have established, but where shall we find it in this city of confusion?"

Having reasoned thus far he arrives at another truth that grows out of these: The God who longs for the salvation of souls, and Who foresaw the torture of perplexed minds, must have made provision to relieve and enlighten them. He surely did not leave them to grope without help, He must have flung out a loving hand to guide, by giving in His inspired Volume definite character marks by which His true Church could be distinguished. He must have set up finger-posts, pointing the *Straight Path* to His holy city. These marks too cannot be obscure for they are to be read by all, they must shine as luminous lamps leading to the home of peace.

This is the just conclusion to which his reasoning leads.

Our inquirer's task has now resolved itself to a definite simple issue, namely: to discover for himself which of these various bodies claiming to be the true Church of Christ possesses the necessary credentials.

To his task he brings but two things—the inspired Bible and a candid mind,—and these two alone suffice.

Opening the sacred Volume he soon discovers that God actually has left four characteristic marks by which His true Church could be known from the spurious imitations. That she should be ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC.

The first portion of the inquiry is thus complete. Having secured his four tests, he next proceeds to apply them to the Christian world of to-day. He closes the Bible and surveys the various Churches in order to discover the four divine birth-marks, the four credentials that guarantee a heavenly origin. At the door of each he knocks demanding the scrip of authority stamped with the four seals that assure humanity she is the genuinely accredited ambassador from God to man.

In one and, only, in one Christian body he discovers them. Then that and that alone must be the true Church and his duty to enter it is imperative.

This conviction is shot home with the force and precision of an iron bolt.

Inquiry now ends, for he has arrived at truth.

This is the result of his search :—

1. Christ being God was bound to leave

definite marks to distinguish His true Church from the various false claimants.

2. That He has done so and *one* Christian body alone possesses them.

3. Therefore, that and no other is the true Church.

This line of reasoning is so direct and so simple that while it satisfies the most cultured intellect, the untutored can follow it with ease; and so irresistible is the force of the conclusion arrived at that no trick or sophistry can loosen the iron grasp with which conviction holds the mind.

Let us now trim the lamp, and looking over our inquirer's shoulder while he reads the sacred page, follow his train of thought as one by one he examines the four marks of the true Church.

# CHAPTER I.

## I.

## THE TRUE CHURCH SHOULD BE ONE.

Statement of the case.

In those passages of Sacred Scripture which describe the Church of Christ, if there is one characteristic that stands out more prominently than another it is her unity. If the inspired writers wished to engrave in characters of light one idea more deeply than another it is that :—

1. The Church is to be one in faith.
2. One in government ; and
3. One in worship.

That in her there shall be no discordant elements, no clashing of systems, no babel of tongues, no multiplicity of heads ; but universal harmony and unity in faith, government and worship ; that the din of discord shall never be heard inside her sacred threshold, but that she was to be as essentially one as the God Who formed her, or as the sun that He has fixed in the arching vault of heaven—"One is My dove : My perfect one is but one".

# The Unity of the True Church

When a speaker or writer wishes to single out and emphasize with special strength and clearness the leading quality of a man or institution, he invariably employs a metaphor or simile to effect his purpose ; and when he desires to leave this character stamped, fixed and luminous as a star of light, the figures are repeated and multiplied. Proofs.

Now, nowhere do we find this practice more common than in Sacred Scripture. The Pharisees are "whitened sepulchres," "a generation of vipers," "blind leaders of the blind". What nervous energy is compressed into these descriptions! Instead of baldly saying that these men were false or insincere, Christ consumes them in a blaze of scorn. Again, "You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world". Here is revealed in one bold stroke of the master-hand the power of the apostolic message to illuminate and purify corrupt and darkened humanity.

Christ and His Apostles when describing the true Church liken it to many things : in each and every comparison the leading, dominant idea is one of unbroken unity.

She was to exist perpetually a corporate society, her members bound together by close and definite bonds ; all professing the same faith ; all subject to the same Ruler, and all united in common worship, offering the same sacrifice and partaking

of the same sacraments. She is spoken of as a "body," a "kingdom," a "sheepfold," a "house," a "temple," a "tree".

A Body.

In exhorting the Ephesians to union and charity among themselves St. Paul sets before their eyes the example of the Church's unity to induce them to close up their ranks and banish discord. "Be careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

"One body and one spirit; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." *

Here the Apostle gives a list of things that are not only one, but that exclude the idea of division, and amongst them he places the "one faith" as necessarily and essentially one as is the "one God" or the "one baptism."

In several other places he speaks of the Church as a "body": "For we being many, are one bread, one body". †

"Some He gave to be apostles . . . unto the edifying of the body of Christ." ‡

"And He hath subjected all things under His feet; and hath made Him head over all the Church, which is His body." §

The foundation of this comparison so significantly repeated is explained by the Apostle him-

* Ephes. IV. 3, 6.
† 1 Cor. X. 17.
‡ Ephes. IV. 11, 12.
§ Ephes. I. 22.

self to the Romans: "For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: so we being many, are one body in Christ". *

The points of likeness here given between the Church and the human body are four:—

(*a*) The body is composed of a variety of members differing in structure, function and position.

(*b*) Each member has a separate office appointed to it, the eye does not do the work of the ear, nor the hand the work of the foot.

(*c*) Each member is endowed with special faculties for the performance of its allotted duties.

(*d*) Yet, though differing so widely, by a marvellous and well-ordered combination, they all coalesce to form one undivided structure, a united, a perfect whole.

Not only are they inserted in a common trunk but by reflex and sympathetic interaction the pain or pleasure, the shame or glory of one is shared by all the other members; all diversity is forgotten and they stand forth as one body.

In like manner the Church of Christ, though composed of different members—rich and poor, servant and master, black and white—would be known if this multitude of diverse members

* Rom. xii. 4, 5.

were united, like those of the human body, into one undivided organism.

As but one soul animates the human body so one faith should vitalize the true Church.

As all the members of the body are directed and governed by but one head, so in the true Church one supreme Pastor should rule its various component parts.

If diversities of faith were discovered in a Christian body, if it became split into different groups acknowledging various heads, it could not be known as the true Church of Christ.

Can the human body be animated by two different and contradictory spirits? Neither can the Church of Christ hold two faiths. Can the members of the human body be directed by two heads? Neither can the Church have more than one supreme guide.

If in a Christian Church diverse faiths or contradictory heads are discovered, that Church has no claim to be recognized as the Church of Christ.

A Kingdom.

Our Lord repeatedly speaks of the Church as a "kingdom":—

"If anyone heareth the word of the kingdom of God." *

"But if I by the spirit of God cast out

* Matt. xiii. 19.

devils, then is the kingdom of God come unto you".*

The Jews, looking through carnal eyes, pictured the Messiah that was to come, despite their own prophecies to the contrary, as a conqueror clothed with *earthly* power, whose glory should surpass that of Solomon ; the earth was to rock under the tramp of his resistless legions ; the Empire of Rome would lie shivered at his feet ; his strong arm would pluck her hated standards from their sacred walls and hurl her proudest banners to the dust ; the splendour of his conquests was to surpass that of Alexander or Augustus ; he would subject the world to the sceptre of the chosen people, and his authority should radiate from Judea to the ends of the earth.

The Unity of the True Church.

Their conception was of a close-knit compact monarchy with the Messiah as head.

Now when Christ came to correct their false notions regarding the *nature* of His kingdom, He is careful not to disturb their central idea, nay more, He repeatedly confirms it. A kingdom indeed, more lasting than the eternal hills, was to spring from Judea, and a King was already born whose authority was to stretch out-spreading as the canopy of heaven ; His power, how-

* Matt. xii. 28.

ever, will not rest on human arms ; His throne will need no support from spears or bucklers ; in a word, His kingdom was not to be of this world.

So far from destroying their picture of a kingdom He leaves it unchanged, only substituting the colours of heaven for those of earth. Such was the kingdom of God that was at hand.

Now inseparably associated with our first notions of a kingdom is the idea of one supreme ruler, and one set of laws acknowledged and obeyed by the body of his subjects.

Should two rulers claim absolute authority within the same territory and demand the allegiance of the same people, then our concept of a kingdom crumbles, and we see instead a land torn by rival factions.

But Christ describes His Church not only as a kingdom but as the kingdom of God on earth wherein should be reflected the splendid harmony and unity of the Church in heaven where the choirs of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect unite to do homage to Him "that sitteth on the throne".

More, He warns us of the weakness and destruction that must come from division "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate".* Its doom is sealed !

* Matt. xii. 25.

Surely it was not on this model of desolate destruction that Christ founded His Church, "For He is not the God of dissension but of peace".* He could not leave His Church a prey to turmoil, the sport of faction, the laughing stock of His enemies.

Then if we find a Church composed of distinct, independent parties, acknowledging rival rulers, professing antagonistic creeds, how can such a Church, or rather group of Churches, justify its comparison to a kingdom? but, above all, how could it be spoken of as the kingdom of God? Would it not bear a far closer resemblance to the kingdoms of Satan where dissension and the spirit of discord rule?

A Sheepfold.

Our Lord also compares His Church to a sheepfold: "And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd,"† "Feed My lambs," "Feed My sheep".

In describing His Church as a sheepfold, and addressing His first Pope as a shepherd, Christ gives a clear-cut and definite image of unbroken unity; He sets up a picture that rejects even the remotest idea of distinct Churches or dis-

* 1 Cor. xiv. 33. † John x. 16; John xxi. 15, 17.

cordant faiths or diverse pastors. A sheepfold having but one door and one shepherd.

The sheep of the same flock cling together, and if momentarily separated they are eager to be reunited ; they follow the same path ; browse on the same pasture. The shepherd knows them all by name ; he loves them, he leads them to the plains of health and plenty. What more beautiful illustration of the undivided unity of the flock of Christ, of the oneness and tender care of the chief shepherd, nourishing their intellects with the undefiled teaching, and feeding their souls with the sacraments, warning them off the poison food of unrighteous teaching ; at the sound of his voice they flee from the wiles of the false shepherds who are wolves in disguise.

And as if this image of unity as a distinguishing mark of His true Church was not sufficiently impressive, He abandons the figurative for literal language and plainly says :—

"There shall be *one* sheepfold, and *one* shepherd ".

A House.

"Be you also as living stones built up, a spiritual house."* Here again we have a metaphor strongly enforcing the idea of unbroken unity in the true Church of Christ.

* 1 Peter II. 5.

She is not only spoken of as an ordinary house where the members are bound together by the warm ties of domestic affection, sheltered under the one roof, sharing the one table, and governed by the natural head of the home ; but the picture is enlarged and its colours heightened by likening the family of the New Law to the household of Israel marching under the leadership of Moses. In this comparison is seen a close bound society, animated by one spirit, ruled by one heaven-elected leader, and living under definite laws.

A Temple.

" You are the temple of God, and the spirit of God dwelleth in you." * A temple is composed of a variety of materials that harmoniously combine to form one undivided structure ; marble and brick, cedar and iron coalesce to make one temple. So the true Church would be distinguished if though made up of various races, differing in tongue, colour, blood and nationality, all would be found held together in the bond of an unbroken faith, producing not discordant factions but one Church.

This image of unity is perfect, especially so when we recollect the purpose of the Apostle. He was writing to people who were converts, some from Judaism and some from pagan-

* 1 Cor. III. 16.

ism. They had dragged into the Church their mutual jealousies and prejudices with the result that discord raged amongst them. This spirit of dissension he wants to cure. How? By reminding them that though they were one time estranged and antagonized, all that is now changed. The great Artificer has taken the raw material—Jew and Gentile—and combined them as living stones into the structure of His temple —His Church. Since they are now cemented together by a living faith. Old-time hatreds should die and the spirit of charity amongst them should resemble the unbroken faith they profess. Here is his reasoning :

If different heads or creeds or worship could find a place in the true Church, St. Paul's argument for undivided charity amongst the Corinthians would not only fall to the ground but fall covered with ridicule.

A Tree.

" The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds ; but when it is grown up . . . and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come, and dwell in the branches thereof." *

Here again is the leading feature of unity.

The tiny seedling planted in Judea was to overshadow the world and yet remain one. One

* Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

seed, one trunk, one taproot wound round the rock—Peter.

Though its branches spread on every side they all spring from a parent trunk, and draw their sap from a common source.

So, the true Church would be known if her scattered millions, separated by oceans and continents, would be found united to the same trunk, nourished by the same faith.

Here we have Christ and His apostles speaking at different times, in different places, and before different audiences, using a variety of figures, imaging forth the likeness of the true Church. Each and every figure gives an idea—if of anything—of the grandest and most perfect unity. She is a body, a kingdom, a sheepfold, a house, a temple, a tree.

Nowhere do we find Him speaking of churches. "Upon this rock I will build My Church," not My churches.

Christ's Prayer.

When the gathering shadows of His approaching passion were closing around Him; seated with His twelve first bishops for the last time before His passion—in the supper chamber at Jerusalem, He raised His eyes and His voice to His eternal Father and poured forth a prayer for His apostles and for the Church now confided to their charge, in which the warm glow

of passionate affection, tinged with the pathos of sorrow, flows through every verse. He asks: "That they may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me: . . . that they may be one, as We also are one. I in them, and Thou in Me: that they may be made perfect in one: and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou also hast loved Me." *

Here He asks His eternal Father for a convincing sign, a seal from heaven, a distinguishing mark to convince the world of the truth of His mission, and the divinity of His Church.

"And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me." †

He asks for no loose union but for the closest and most perfect, modelled on the most absolute of unions—the union between Christ and His Father; one in substance, one in nature, one in essence. "That they may be one as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee."

He asks this gift for a special purpose; as an argument unconquerable and invincible in proof of His Church's divinity.

* John xvii. 21, 23. † *Ibid.*

"That the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou also hast loved Me." It is as if he said :—

"Give a proof, O eternal Father, a convincing proof of My Church's divinity, seal upon her brow the stamp of her heavenly birth which she will carry to unborn ages, and through the revolving cycles of time, to convince humanity that Thou lovest her as Thou lovest Me, and let that heavenly seal be UNITY amongst her members that will reflect the divine harmony between Thee and Me."

"As there are many rays of light, but one sun," says St. Cyprian, "many branches but one root, many streams but one source, so the Church sends forth her rays over the whole earth, yet the light is one and its unity is undivided."

## II.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS ONE.

HAVING, I think, conclusively established the fact that in founding His Church, Christ wished her to be one through every age and nation, that her unity was to constitute one of the character-marks of her divine origin : let us glance around the world and ask, What Church to-day do we find endowed with this luminous seal of a

One in Government.

heavenly birth? The answer rises to every lip —The Catholic Church and the Catholic Church alone.

In her march over twenty centuries of time and through a world of perpetual change, she alone remains unchanged.

During the past twenty centuries great nations have risen, flourished, and then vanished to join the shadows of things that were. Thrones whose deep foundations went down through a thousand years tottered and fell. Vast empires have risen the world over and met and clashed like the waves on the bosom of the troubled sea only to dissolve and pass away. Kingship, empire, and republic each had had its day. The phases of society have changed like the varying colours of a dying sunbeam. Yet through all this change the government of God's Church remains as unaltered as is the divine Author to whom she owes her birth.

Two hundred and sixty-four millions of Catholics to-day recognize in Holy Father the supreme Vicar and representative of Christ on earth with the same passionate devotion, the same unswerving loyalty as the early Christians tendered St. Peter when he presided at the first Council of the Church.

A fact of overpowering splendour!

Great dynasties die like flowers of the field,
Great empires wither and fall;
Glories there have been that blazed to the stars;
They have been—and that is all.
But there is the grand old Roman See
The ruins of earth among,
Young with the youth of its early prime,
With the strength of Peter strong.*

The fact that on more than one occasion there were rival claimants for the Papal throne by no means weakened the unity of government; for Catholics, from end to end of Christendom, never wavered in their belief that there was but one supreme pastor over all the Church: a principle that Protestants can not accept without ceasing to be Protestants—their only difficulty was, Which of the rivals was the true Pope?—How many claimants there have been for the English crown, Yet how has that fact weakened the oneness of the kingship? Catholics wisely trusted time to adjust the dispute and finally lead all parties to recognize the lawful Pontiff.

One in Faith.

In a world where men's minds are perpetually changing and contradictory, the articles of Catholic faith remain as unchanged as the God Who gave them. The twelve articles drawn up in the first century are, to-day, after two thousand years, sounding harmoniously like twelve notes of cease-

*Dr. Murray.

less music in the ears of over two hundred and sixty million Catholics, without even a suspicion of change.

Summon before you the countless millions of Catholics who have died during the past nineteen centuries. Call from the dust of the Coliseum the myriad martyrs of the first century who were taught by the Apostles : invite the swarthy shades of the Africans who drank in the silver eloquence of Cyprian, or listened with rapture to the thunders of Tertullian in the second and third centuries : from the banks of the Nile and Thames call those who were taught by the great Athanasius, and England's first apostle in the fourth and sixth. Let your voice sound through the crypts of Notre Dame or through the vaults of Germany to those who were baptized by Boniface in the eighth century. Call a representative of every age and every clime, of every colour and every tongue and arrange them in a circle around you.

Stand in the centre of that circle and put the question to each : What was the faith taught in your age and country ? and see if in a single iota of doctrine these representatives of countless millions and long centuries differ among themselves or from us. *

* In the fourth chapter this evidence from antiquity will be found not only possible but eminently practical.

Test it for yourselves. Cast your eyes over the world to-day, over every land these two hundred and sixty-four millions of Catholics are to be found in—that is, over every land God's sun shines on—and see if there is a single divergence in their faith, worship, or government.

Let an Irishman go to wherever the Catholic doctrine is preached be it in the musical language of France or the rough dialect of the Slav ; let him wander through the cinnamon groves of Persia, or among the yellow races of China or Japan, and he will find himself as much at home as in his own parish church ; and the doctrine taught identical with that held in St. Peter's by the Tiber.

"Though spread over the world," says St. Irenæus, "the Church preserves the apostolic faith with the utmost zeal as if she dwelt in one house ; she believes it as if she had but one mind and one heart ; and with admirable accord she professes and teaches it as if she had but one tongue. The languages of the world may differ but the faith is everywhere the same."

Forty-five years only have gone by since the world saw these words verified and illustrated by a spectacle of unparalleled splendour. **Vatican Council.**

The voice of the supreme Pontiff went forth summoning the universal episcopate to General

Council at Rome. That voice was heard and obeyed at the farthest ends of the earth. From the far off islands of the South Pacific, from the northern regions of polar white, from across the vast plains of India and scorching sands of Africa the world's bishops hastened to Rome.

Like the towering cedars of Lebanon seven hundred and sixty-seven mitred heads were reared around the throne of Peter; they represented over thirty different nations, varying in colour, in language, in thought, in laws; differing in everything under the sun save and except in the Church's immutable faith, and in her children's unswerving loyalty to Christ's Vicar.

Two hundred and sixty-four millions of men spoke through the lips of those bishops. Yet as each came forward to make his profession of faith, was there a divergence, a contradiction? No. They spoke as if they all lived in one house, as if that vast multitude had but one heart and one tongue.

Three centuries had rolled by since the Fathers of the Church had met in Council before. These three hundred years had marked a change in all things save the immutable faith of God's Church. Laws and opinions were transformed; empires dissolved; the very habit of thought was changed; yet here is the universal

episcopate met from every point of the compass, with a faith as pure, as unchanged, as united as when the last notes of the Te Deum died in the great Council hall of Trent three hundred years before.

What power could hold two hundred and sixty-four millions of men united for three-hundred years, for one year, for a day, even for an hour? No power but the One that created the one sheepfold, gave it a living breath, and armed the One Shepherd with His own authority.

## III.

## NO OTHER CHURCH IS ONE.

No Unity of Government.

Outside the Catholic Church, Do we find unity in doctrine, worship, and government?—Alas! in the very face of things there is not even a pretence of such. How could there be! The disruptive fundamental principle of private judgment could produce nothing but anarchy and chaos.

The great question with the most important Protestant body in these islands is to discover its own head, if it has one, and surely a body without a head can scarcely claim to be a divine production.

There are three great Protestant powers, Eng-

land, Germany, and America. Do we find a shred, a pretence of unity amongst them? Do we find it even in one nation? England alone has two hundred and twenty mutually destructive and contradictory Christian bodies. Narrow the question down even to one city and listen to a Protestant minister bewailing the divisions and dissensions of his church. "In the city of Rome, the city of the papacy, as if to supply Roman Catholics with conclusive arguments against the Reformation, the handful of Protestants—four thousand in number—are divided into nineteen different denominations."*

No Unity of Faith.

Narrow the question still further. Take twenty men coming out of the same church door. Get their independent views even on vital matters and you will find them as far apart as the east is from the west.

Quarrels and contradiction are not confined to the flock, the chiefs in high places blow discordant trumpets.

It is surely a question of first magnitude to know, How many sacraments Our Lord left us? Some say five, some three, and others one. It is surely a question of prime importance for the Protestant layman to ask, Is his minister a truly

* "Irish Church Claims."—Rev. W. C. Kerr, B.A., T.C.D., pp. 13-14.

ordained, sacrificing priest? The Archbishop of York informs them he is, his Lordship of Liverpool says, such teaching comes not from above—but from below.*

What is the poor distracted layman to do in such a babel of confusion?

But why waste words in proving facts so obvious!

It is only by contrast with such exhibitions of helpless disorder that we see the full majesty, the cohesive splendour and unbroken unity of the Catholic Church.

Spread through nations the most diverse, running down through twenty centuries of time —time affecting all things else yet leaving her untouched—her voice rises from the east and from the west, from the fringes of northern snows and from the tropical isles of the south, yet not a note of dissonance, not a syllable of change. By whatever tongue the faith is professed, be it Celtic or Arabic, Teuton or Slav, the sounds may differ but the meanings of the words remains the same, Unity in multiplicity, harmony in variety marks her everywhere.

* "This modern system, which is not satisfied with Christ's priesthood, but must have mortal men as priests besides, bears the mark of its origin on its face. It is from beneath and not from above." "Have You a Priest?"—Right Rev. J. C. Ryle, Bishop of Liverpool, 1877.

Conclusion.

Wise men of old were struck by the unchanging unity, the unbroken harmony that governed the laws of nature. Wherever the impress of God's hand appeared there was an absence of disorder.

They marked the marvellous unity of the planetary system. Each planet moving in its appointed sphere, yet all controlled by a central power. They saw the regular ebb and flow of the tide, the rise and set of the sun, the unvaried succession of seasons ; and they justly reasoned : the Author of such harmony must be divine. In nature's unity they saw the hand of nature's God.

Now if men can behold His perfections mirrored in the sunlit sea ; if they can hear His voice in the tempest roar ; if they can see His power in the falling leaf and the opening bud ; if in characters of flame they can read His majesty across the starry splendours of the heavens ; if His attributes are so visible in the elements of clay, How much more luminous should not His perfections shine in the life, constitution, and changeless unity of His living master-piece, His chosen spouse, His One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE HOLINESS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

### I.

### THE TRUE CHURCH SHOULD BE HOLY.

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ has loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle nor any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." *

In this chapter we come to consider the second mark or note of the true Church—its sanctity.

The true Church should be holy—

1. In her Founder;

2. In her teaching holy;

3. In her helps and means conducive to holiness;

4. The fruits of that holiness should be visible and permanent in her children and works.

Proofs from the Old Testament.

Let us first open the Old Testament and read the passages descriptive of the Church to be founded by the Messiah.

* Ephes. v. 25.

"I am appointed king by him over Sion, his holy mountain." *

"In his days shall justice spring up and abundance of peace till the moon be taken away." † Here Christ through the mouth of His Psalmist speaks of His future Church as a kingdom, a figure of speech, as we have seen, repeated by Himself; and in describing this kingdom He uses but one qualifying word. What is it? Holiness. "His *holy* mountain," as if holiness was to be the special characteristic of His Church. He goes farther, and declares that that character was to cling to her for ever. "Till the moon be taken away."

Isaias then entering this spiritual kingdom, uplifts the veil and sets before our eyes the happy condition of things flourishing there. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: they shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain." ‡

Humanity was so depraved before the advent of Christ that men, by giving way to passions, had engrafted on their lives the natures of the beasts, and are spoken of as wolves, leopards, asps, but when the new spirit would pour itself over the earth all this would change, the wolfish feuds would die, and the asp-like tongues would

* Ps. II. 6. † Ps. LXXI. 7. ‡ Isaias XI. 6-9.

drip with charity because the God of peace would establish His kingdom; and the men once likened to asps and wolves would then show the white innocence of the harmless lamb, and their sweet lives flow unoffending as the suckling babe's.

When before the prophet's mystic gaze the marvellous transformation passed, when he saw the chains of the old slavery falling off; the brutish passions dying; the reign of innocent harmony established, and the beauteous daughters of religion—purity, innocence, and love—springing up, his heart glowed with rapturous admiration and he hails this glorious spouse, this royal kingdom, this future Church :—

"Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, thou shalt be called My pleasure in her . . . because the Lord hath been well pleased with thee. And the bridegroom shall rejoice over the bride, and thy God shall rejoice over thee." *

Here the Church of Christ is described as a crown of glory, the object of His pleasure and His rapturous love.

Now in a thousand places in Sacred Scripture sinners are spoken of as objects of God's hatred —at best of His mercy—but never as objects of

† Isaias LXII. 3-5.

His love. How could He love them? Rebels against His authority, allies of His sworn foe. The just and the just alone can be the objects of God's love. "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them: he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father: and I will love Him, and will manifest Myself to Him."* But if His Church had ceased to love Him, had ceased to keep His commandments, had defected and fallen away, it may in all reason be asked, How could such a Church be described as His crown of glory, His pleasure, the object over which He rejoices as the bridegroom over his new-made bride?

Proofs from the New Testament.

When we turn from the Old to the New Testament, the figures increase in point, cogency, and clearness.

We have heard Isaias comparing the Church to a spouse. St. Paul taking up this comparison explains and justifies it. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ has loved the Church." He tells them to love and cherish their wives with pure and tender love as Christ does His Church, for the tie between them resembles in its closeness, its intimacy, and its everlasting nature the bond of devoted love that unites Christ to His Church.

* John xiv. 21.

Good order requires that everything in heaven and on earth shall be holy in proportion to the closeness of its relation with God, as the bodies in our solar system increase in heat and light according to their nearness to the sun. For this reason Mary, whose relation to God was that of a mother towards her child, should be "full of grace" and "blessed among women". For the same reason the priest should be more holy than the layman. Now what stronger method of expressing the sanctity of the Church than to compare her union with Christ to the most perfect union this world knows—the union between man and wife; to speak of her as the spouse of Christ "without spot or wrinkle" "holy and without blemish?"

When God cast a deep sleep upon Adam, He took from his side a portion of his substance and from it formed, and presented to Adam a being the most like unto himself in all creation—flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, He united them in bonds of mutual love, He blessed and sanctified the union of the first pair. In like manner, when the sleep of death crept over the Second Adam on the Cross His side too was opened and blood and water issued forth. From this substance did Christ form

His Church, to be His cherished spouse, the object of His complacent love.

The Reformers.

When the Reformers of the sixteenth century ask us to believe that the Church—spoken of as the spouse of Christ, without spot or wrinkle, whose sanctity was to remain till the moon be taken away, the Church with which Christ was to be all days—that that same Church had become corrupted in soul and body, they ask us to believe that Christ did not, or perhaps was not able to keep His promise of abiding with her for ever, to guide, preserve, and direct; and that St. Paul knew very little of the Church he was describing when he spoke of her as "glorious," "holy," and "without blemish". These unproved and improbable assertions we are asked to accept on the authority of men attempting to justify their own apostacy.

The Apostolic Commission.

We now turn from those figures so clear and definite to read the Apostolic commission. "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." *

* Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

Christ gathers the eleven around Him before sending them forth, and in the clearest terms defines their duty—to dispel the clouds of darkness that hung above the intellects of men, "Going therefore, teach all nations," to purify their souls by baptism and gather them into the Church, there to teach them "all things"—not only the precepts that bind under sin, but the counsels to rise to higher levels of perfection. And in that mission for the sanctifying and instructing of humanity, He assures them that the strength of His right arm will be by them not for three or four hundred years but as long as men are to be taught, and souls to be made holy. "All days even to the consummation of the world."

Are we then to believe, in the light of this commission, and especially with the guarantee Christ has given for its success, that the Church so commissioned, and so shadowed by His protecting power, became not the fruitful mother of saints but that the curse of barrenness attended her, and that the blight of failure paralyzed her efforts? No, for these same apostles He tells, "I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain".*

* John xv. 16.

The Purpose for which Christ established the Church.

Every society is founded for a fixed, definite purpose. One to promote social intercourse, another to advance the interests of trade, a third, perhaps, to cultivate literary tastes. Now the sole purpose for which Christ founded His Church was to sanctify human souls ; to make men holy ; to train them to model their lives on their Divine Master's. Here is the very *raison d'être* of her existence. She was not called into this world to build railways, to establish factories, or to make alliances. In her eyes a condemned wretch once steeped in crime, now sobbing contrition at the foot of the gallows, is of vastly greater importance than the defeat of an Armada or the discovery of a new world. Her one aim is to sanctify human souls. For this alone God established her. Take away that end and What meaning would her presence in this world have? Would she not stand like some obelisk torn from a civilization long since passed?—a lonesome object of wonder, and of interest only to the antiquarian and the curious?

Was it for this barren purpose Christ established His Church? Rather was it not that she might constitute a living, energizing power, operating through her multiform activities on the restless masses around her, struggling to break the fetters of sin-bound souls ; pouring

in light where darkness reigned, sending the precious Blood flowing over human hearts ; and causing the fair flowers of fragrant virtue to flourish ?

She was to continue Christ's mission ; and He has left us in no doubt what the object of that mission was—not to call the just, but sinners to repentance,—to cast fire upon the earth.

This is her mission too ; this is the grand goal towards which all her energies converge, and if she accomplishes it she triumphs. It matters little in what condition she achieves that conquest, be it in the blood of the Catacombs or the rags of penal poverty.

On the other hand, though the splendour of her liturgy and the stateliness of her ceremonial challenged the world's admiration, though her Doctors were rich in learning, though the highest artistic genius triumphed in her temples, yet if she succeeded not in sanctifying humanity, if none, or only few amongst her children were found with the spirit or works of holiness ; then indeed would her mission have failed ; the sceptre would have fallen from the royal hand of Juda, the gates of hell would have prevailed and the promise of the living God been made void.

We see the Church called the "body of Christ," "His spouse," "His kingdom," "His

temple". Now if these words imply anything it is eminent and abiding holiness. How could she be His spouse if her members were, in most part, divorced from Him by sin? How could she be called the body of Christ if from the vast portion of her children the spirit of Christ had departed? If so far from being animated by His spirit she had become a corpse? How could she be His kingdom if not the spirit of Christ but the spirit of Satan reigned within her? How His temple if instead of enshrining His spirit, and being illuminated by His teaching she had become polluted and accursed?

We have reviewed the question on every side, and at each step of the enquiry the light grew brighter and the conviction sank deeper that one of the most conspicuous marks destined by God to distinguish His true Church was the character of sanctity or holiness.

I hope to convince the reader that the Catholic Church alone can produce this credential of her authority.

## II.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH *IS* HOLY.

We claim that :—

1. The Church is holy in her Founder.
2. Holy in her teaching.

3. Holy in the effective aids she gives.

4. Holy in the body of her members, and the fruit they have produced.

Here let us anticipate a difficulty.

A Difficulty answered.

What do we mean when we say the body of the Church is holy? Do we imply that every individual Catholic is a shining model of sanctity? Alas! the lives of many are a shame to the faith they profess.

But surely that does not militate against the sanctity of the Church. St. Paul calls the Church at Corinth a congregation of saints, though he reproves some scandalous members amongst them. Considering human nature as it is constituted, is not this what might be expected? Every man has free will to become either a saint or a sinner. God forces no one. "Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death." * Man is free to select either of these paths—the path that leads to perdition, or the path that leads to paradise.

Our Lord warned us that scandals would come; and He compares His Church to a net enclosing fish, some bad and some good, awaiting the day of separation; to a field where the grain and cockle grow side by side till the coming of the harvest scythe.

* Jer. xxi. 8.

Why then, you may ask, does the Church not shake off those unworthy Catholics? Why does she not cast those lives of shame from out her communion?—Her charity forbids it.

Like another Monica, she for ever turns with tearful eyes and a sighing heart towards her erring child; with prayers she storms heaven that her poor prodigal will one day find peace in his father's arms.

Nor does the occasional fall of a great man tell against her character of holiness. Sin found its way amongst the angels in heaven. Sin crept in amidst the fair bowers of Paradise. The little band of twelve that Christ selected from all the children of Adam's race held a traitor. For three years their minds were enriched by the doctrine that flowed from His lips, and their faith confirmed by the daily wonders of His power. They saw the tempest quelled when His outstretched hand was raised above its fury. They beheld Him pour the visual ray upon the sightless eyeballs of the blind, the dumb tongues loosened, and the leprous wretches cleansed. Yet, in a body so privileged, one Judas was found.

We may be shocked then and cry, O star of the morning, how art thou fallen? With these examples before us, how can we be surprised?

Indeed, an isolated scandal, so far from dim-

ming the Church's lustre, calls forth a unique testimony in her favour: her enemies unconsciously bear witness to her holiness. For while the non-Catholic world takes little heed of the frequent delinquencies of its own clergymen, let a Catholic priest fall from his high estate and mark how Press and platform ring with his name and shame. There is no mistaking that cry of astonished surprise. It is the world testifying to the sanctity of the Catholic Church, and declaring that it expects a standard of holiness in her ministers nowhere else to be found.

The tree of fairest blossom will always have its sapless branch and withered leaves. In the Church, the tares are permitted to grow alongside the wheat till the angel reapers come. There will always be a Judas to betray and a Peter to deny.

But what we do mean is this: We call the body of the Church "holy" in the same sense as men call the city of London "rich". The wealth of London is so evident and so prominent that she deserves the title rich, though within her gates are thousands of paupers, and thousands more who live from hand to mouth.

Holy in her Founder and Teaching.

1. That her Founder was God, the Author of all sanctity, there is no necessity to prove since no one denies it.

2. That the matter of her teaching conduces to the highest sanctity is equally plain ; but she teaches in a manner different from all others. A school of philosophy may in timorous accents advise the pursuit of virtue ; but it neither speaks with authority nor offers a means of translating its advice into fact. The most emphatic pronouncement of a Protestant Church never rises above a guess. The fatal doctrine of private judgment has broken the backbone of its teaching authority ; in the echo of every sentence we hear the suppressed whisper, " Perhaps I am wrong ".

Far different is it with the Catholic Church. She comes clothed with the power of Christ's ambassador. She speaks with the authority of Him Who declares " He that hears you, hears Me ". There is no faltering in her accents : it is the voice of the " pillar and ground of truth ".

**Holy in the Aids She Gives.**

3. She not only persuades the intellect with the certitude of Revelation, but she supplies efficient means to make her teaching concrete fact. She is not content with pointing to higher levels and crying " Excelsior," but at every stage of the upward journey the strong and loving arm is folded around us, and her cheering voice is ringing in our hearts.

Let us enter and uplift the veil of the inner sanctuary, and watch her sacramental system operating on the hearts of men. The sacraments are seven channels by which she irrigates and fertilizes the souls of her children with the precious Blood. The Sacramental System.

A child is born but the dark shadow of a primeval curse rests upon it ; that infant soul she takes in her arms and breathes her words of power above it. At the touch of the regenerating waters the leprosy of sin flies, a new life springs up within, and that soul now glows with the beauty of the divine. As a piece of iron thrust into the furnace flames, sparkles, and assumes the appearance of the fire which penetrates it, so the flashing splendour of God Himself fills and plays around that infant soul.

If a newly baptized soul were to appear above the tabernacle, the blaze of its glory would dazzle us, we would fall prostrate and adore, thinking it was God Himself.

The Church now becomes its mother, and when the powers of the young mind open and grow hungry for knowledge she feeds it with the milk of sacred truth ; gives tone, colour and trend to the budding powers of reason.

Another stage is reached. The young soldier is now facing life's battle. The war between the

conscience and the passions begins to rage within his breast, and lo! she anoints him with the strengthening chrism of confirmation; arms him with the seven-fold gifts; shadows him with the pentecostal spirit; blesses and sends him forth to conquer in her name.

Alas! in an evil hour he strays from the walls of Jerusalem, is waylaid and wounded unto death by robber passions; the world, the flesh, and the devil have assailed him. Who is the good Samaritan kneeling by his side? The Church. Her ear is upon his lips, and when he sobs out his tale of sorrow, she pours in the oil of strength and the wine of hope.

He is weak from his wounds, and she carries him to the inn—her own sanctuary. She places his lips to the open Heart and he drinks of the Blood that is drink indeed—the wine that brings forth virgins.

And now young manhood's prime is reached, and she leads him to her altar, there to sanctify the affections of his heart in the marriage state.

Or perhaps the voice of the turtle is heard in the land—the voice of the Holy Ghost calling him to the sanctuary that he may stand at her altar, immolate the Sacred Victim and offer the precious Blood for the sins of the people. And over his prostrate form she prays that God may

consecrate and sanctify her young levite, and endow him with power to walk through the fiery furnace of temptation unscorched.

The final hour is now at hand and the soul trembles on the threshold of eternity. Lo! the watchful mother is there with her last unction to nerve it for the final struggle; so that no spirit of evil may stand upon its path, or impede its upward flight.

Nor does her solicitude cease with the final pulse beat. The clay around our bones she sanctifies, and in her daily Sacrifice pleads our pardon.

I need not remind you that the religion of a Catholic is not a thing for Sundays and holidays only, but a permanent, abiding factor in his daily life. The morning prayer, the daily Mass, the thrice-rung Angelus, the evening Rosary, the ever open doors of our churches, and the adorers before the tabernacle show the holiness of the Church.

Holiness in her Children.

Our Lord says, "I am the vine; you are the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit:" * Let us now look for that fruit in the children of the Catholic Church.

Take up the lives of her Saints and point, if

* John xv. 5.

you can, to a single virtue that can adorn humanity that is not found here in fairest bloom. What variety! What splendour!

The fiery heart of St. Francis Xavier panting for conquest, the child martyrs St. Agnes and St. Pancratius triumphing over the furies of the Colosseum, St Vincent de Paul tugging at the galleys to free a slave, or warming a forsaken child on the bosom of his love.

What does this world hold comparable to the long bead roll of the Church's heroes?

Turn to our books of devotion and mark the waves of flame poured out from hearts that are furnace houses of God's purest love. No dull formulæ, no cold platitudes! The leaves of our prayer-books are fragrant with the sweetest essence of piety. The sanctified hearts of her children speak through their pages.

Holiness in her Works.

4. But let us lift our eyes and look further afield, and see the monuments to the Church's holiness in the works she has accomplished. When two disciples came from St. John the Baptist to our Lord asking, "Art thou He that art to come, or do we look for another?" what answer does He give them?—"Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have

the gospel preached to them."* The question was, Are you divine? The answer, Look to My works, Are they not divine? Read then My divinity in My works ; and as a culminating proof that I am divine, tell John that the poor have the gospel preached to them.

If a similar question were put to the Catholic Church to-day, could she not give a like reply?

You ask am I divine?—Look to my works, let them speak. Go into the cities where I reside and see there the fairest heights are crowned by stately structures which shelter the poor and the helpless ; for the outcast elements of society I have reserved my finest palaces. Enter and see My chosen spouses, whom I wear as a seal upon My Heart consecrating their lives of devoted love to the service of these outcasts.

The orphan waif from the city slums finds a mother and a home, they are folding to their stainless bosoms the creature whose life was once the synonym of shame—the penitent girl whom a cruel world wrecked, then trampled on and cast aside like a broken toy.

No, Look for no other, I am she that was to come.

See them facing the terrors of the cholera ship or the cancer ward, look into the lanes

* Matt. xi. 3-5.

and alleys where ragged want and despair are found ; My chosen ones are breaking the crust to the hungry lips, and lighting the dying eyes with hope that beams from the Crucifix.

No, look for no other, I am she that was to come.

The war blast now rings upon the air, and the fiercest passions of man's basest blood are all ablaze. Through the live-long day the furnace flame from the batteries, the rattle of musketry and the clash of sabres announce death to thousands. Lo, from the vaulted blue of the midnight skies, the peaceful moonbeam lights up the Crucifix in the Sister's hand as she presses it to the lips of the dying soldier.

No, Look for no other, I am she that was to come.

Molokai. Turn to those islands of tropical palms washed by the waters of the South Pacific—they are the leper settlements of Molokai.

Where Nature's smiles are fairest, the darkest of human curses has found a home. The very air wafts poison. Those wretched souls are not wedded to living bodies but to putrid corpses.

The stony cry of the Old Law was "Room for the leper". An outcast, he dwelt among the tombs, the public roads he dare not walk,

of the running stream he dare not drink. Away, unclean!

Behold, from the shores of distant Europe, swept onward by the flame of charity, bands of devoted priests and nuns are hurrying to tend those suffering children of Christ, and finally to share their doom.

No, look for no other, I am she that was to come.

The leper is cleansed, the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Who flashed the light of truth across the midnight skies of pagan darkness in China and Japan? Who watered every province with their richest blood? Who carried, at the peril of their lives, My message to the swarthy Ethiopian, and the dusky children of the southern isles? The apostles of My Church. Here are her works divine.

Then, look for no other, she it is that was to come.

Philanthropy.

I may be reminded of philanthropy outside the Church. I gladly acknowledge it, but we must draw a very broad line of distinction between individual philanthropy and those vast organizations of charity which are the natural outgrowth of the Church's life, and that have accompanied her as closely as her shadow in every land where she has found a home.

She Sanctifies National Life.

Not only does she sanctify social but national life also.

A nation's mind illumined by faith can never be torn from high ideals ; and a nation's heart fed by her spirit can never degenerate into grossness.

The writer once heard a foreign infidel deliver himself thus :—

"I am no Christian, I have little love for the Catholic Church, but I search in vain through history for any nation suffering a tithe of Ireland's slavery that succeeded in retaining virtue in her daughters and manhood in her sons. What power enabled Ireland to form so bright an exception to this universal law? I must acknowledge it. Her faith."

Spain.

He need not search in vain. The same faith sustained another Celtic land through, if possible, a more fiery ordeal.

While Eastern Christianity, undermined by the dry rot of heresy, fell under the assaults of conquest, or sank into degraded barbarism, Catholic Spain sustained a fight during eight centuries against the Mohammedan, till at length, gathering up her strength for one grand effort, she hurled the dusky curse from off her bosom for ever.

This is the lesson history holds for the young Irishman of to-day—that but for the strength of

his father's faith, instead of knowing the meaning of the word "liberty" or having the power to struggle for it, he would find its last spark had been quenched in blood twenty generations past, and he himself would be a degraded slave, kissing the smiter's hand.

Faith fed their souls: she whispered in their ears eternal hope; she fixed their eyes on stars beyond the reach of man: her sustaining power enabled them to tower above the darkest storms that burst upon our land.

Look around to-day to those nations that have attempted to construct civilization on anti-christian planks. They are unsound from top to bottom; honeycombed with nihilist and Free-mason societies; and they know not but that in their proudest hour the ground may rock and heave beneath them in the convulsive throes of revolution.

## III.

### NO OTHER CHURCH IS HOLY.

Do we find this character of holiness in any other Church? Founders.

First, In its founder? Whenever God raised up genuine reformers He never left it on the lips of vice to say of them "Physician heal thyself".

They were men of eminent holiness—men of the stamp of Hildebrand, Borromeo, Ignatius and Alphonsus.

Now if He wished to reform His Church in the sixteenth century, the most unlikely instruments He could select would be Henry VIII of England and Luther of Germany. Men whose lives cannot be read without a blush.

Is any other Church holy in fruit?

Holy in her Works.

Backed by the gold and bayonets of the most wealthy of modern nations, with the expenditure of millions, and with three centuries for a trial, Protestantism has failed to raise any race, no matter how small, from primitive savagery. This is an appalling fact, a confession of helpless impotence. How could it be otherwise, since it is devoid of every weapon, natural and supernatural, by which such victories are achieved.

The religious orders have ever been the advance guards of missionary enterprise:

Stripped of earthly possessions; the ties of home, family and country cut; trained to discipline, moved by the voice of authority, in possession of the sanctifying forces drawn from Calvary, the fruitful breath of Pentecost upon their efforts, and every thought of self consumed in the fire of a single purpose—the salvation of souls.

But the first step the Reformers took was to dissolve these legions of conquest, and what a poor substitute for these light-armed Francs-tireurs is even the best-intentioned parson, encumbered with a wife and family, naturally anxious about their health and prospects, tied to the earth by every cord of Adam and armed only with a Bible of no authentic interpretation. What a weak soldier! What feeble arms!

The Holy Mass and the sacraments are the main channels by which the precious Blood is poured over human souls. But the Reformation abolished the divine Sacrifice, ceased to nourish humanity with the bread that is "meat indeed," diminished the number of sacraments and impaired their efficacy; thus closing up the main sources by which men are sanctified.

Protestantism ignores the evangelical counsels. "Take up your cross," "Deny yourself," are maxims rarely if ever heard on her lips. She never attempted to crush the baser elements in man. The upward struggles of those who aim at perfection she does not understand, so far from this, the whole system aimed at unmuzzling those passions which clamour like hungry wolves. Every restraint that could hold in check the vicious tendencies of corrupt nature she swept aside—celibacy, fasting, obedience to

divinely appointed authority, confession, an unbroken marriage-tie ; licence of intellect and licence of sensuality got full play. Then, even if there were no other cause, the absence of fixed doctrine and definite authority would be sure to bring enfeeblement.

Is it any wonder that such a system is completely devoid of driving force, that even its supernatural character is daily evaporating, that blight and failure are written large over its every effort? Such a feeble instrument is lacking in every requisite essential to the giant task of uplifting whole peoples from barbarism into the light and sweetness of Christian civilization.

In striking contrast to this gigantic failure is another fact, the most stupendous the world holds, the fact of a conquest overpowering in its own magnitude and in the force of the argument it supplies. It is this—That history challenges you to unroll the world's map and point to a single nation reclaimed from barbarism and led into the light of civilization except through the agency of the Catholic Church. Here is an argument to ponder on !

No arms with her save the Crucifix in the hand of her missionary, no power but the power of Pentecost that overshadows her, and sweeps her onwards and upwards from victory to victory.

Yes, the regeneration of every land in the past is the work of her hand ; and we feel every assurance that in the future too she is destined to give peace and rest to the troubled and doubting millions to-day outside her fold.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CATHOLICITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH

### I.

### THE TRUE CHURCH SHOULD BE CATHOLIC.

What is Meant by Catholicity.

THE word Catholic is in itself a general term meaning universal. This universality or Catholicity was to be another of those great distinctive marks by which the true Church could be singled out from the multitude of false claimants.

She was to be endowed with a triple Catholicity.

1. She was to be Catholic in point of time. From the day of Pentecost till the heavens and the earth be passed away she was to exist. "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." *

2. She was to be Catholic in place. She was to be, not the Church of Judea, or of England, or of Italy, she was to be the Church of mankind, the Church of humanity. The entire earth was to be the theatre of her mission. "Teach all nations."

* Matt. xxviii. 20.

3. She was to be Catholic in numbers.

The number of her children was to be so great that at a glance she would be discovered towering in solitary grandeur above any individual sect. There was given to her a dignity and certain splendour in the world by which her majesty could easily be recognized.

Here let us anticipate a difficulty.

A Difficulty Met.

It was never promised that every individual being, or even every baptized soul should belong to her communion.

Since man has free will to remain in her bosom or fall into heresy, exclusive Catholicity was out of the question.

Neither was it guaranteed that her children should outnumber those of all the other sects united—though as a matter of fact they do. It was promised that compared with any *individual sect* her giant proportions should be found to far outstrip it ; that when men would ask, "Where is she that counts her children as sands on the seashore, as stars in the firmament, whose faith is proclaimed in a multitude of tongues like the voice of many waters?"—they could be told, "Lift up your heads and behold her towering as a pyramid above the tents, a giant above the pigmies".

She calls her sons from the four winds of

heaven, and her glorious title Catholic is written in characters of light upon her brow.

Proofs from the Old Testament.

Such is a statement of the case. We now proceed to the proofs. If we take up the Old Testament we see that, from the day the word went forth that the Woman should crush the serpent's head, all the prophecies point in the most explicit manner to the universality or Catholicity of the Church of the Messiah.

Abraham.

To Abraham it was promised that all generations should be blessed in his seed: this referred to the Messiah Who was to spring from his blood: how else could all generations be blessed in him except by belonging to the Church through which his blessings flow.

But to belong to that Church her existence amongst all generations was necessary.

When before the prophetic gaze of the dying Jacob the uncounted numbers and unlimited extent of the Messiah's kingdom passed, he exclaimed, "He shall be the expected of all nations".

Isaias.

The prophet Isaias tells us that he saw the house of God lifted above the hills, and all the nations flowing into its doors. "The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it." *

* Isaias II. 2.

This is a description of no small or obscure Church, but one exalted above the hill-tops for the world's gaze, towards which the feet of multitudes turn. And when before his rapturous vision passed the sight of the limitless empire of the Messiah, his heart glowed, and he exultingly addresses the first home of this future Church, "Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy eyes round about, and see; all these are gathered together, they are come to thee; thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side. Then shalt thou see and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea shall be converted to thee, the strength of the Gentiles shall come to thee."* Now these terms "all nations," "all generations," "the multitude of the sea," must mean vast numbers gathered from different tribes and peoples.

If we had any doubt on that head when we Psalms.

*Isaias lx. 1-5.

lay down the prophecies, that doubt is dispelled when we open the psalms.

David sends forth a pæan of joy to the apostles going forth from Jerusalem to spread the good tidings to the scattered children of Adam. "Their sound has gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the end of the world." *

If these prophecies mean anything, if human language points conclusively to any one idea, it is this: that whereas under the Old Law the true Church was confined to one nation only, suited exclusively to one people, when the Messiah was come, the division walls would be broken down, the barriers levelled, and His message carried from end to end of the world.

Proofs from the New Testament.

When we now lay down the Old and open the New Testament we find the character of Catholicity grows more luminous.

When our Saviour commissioned His apostles to preach, He assigned to them not one or two nations but the entire world irrespective of colour, race, or language. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." † "Go ye, into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." ‡ This is their credential, this the scope of their message to "all nations" to "the whole world".

* Ps. xviii. 5. † Matt. xxviii. 19. ‡ Mark xvi. 15.

During the forty days He remained with them after His Resurrection, instructing them in the nature and government of the Church, He explained the universal scope of their labours. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." *

Here is described in crystal clearness, as definite as human language can make it, the Catholic or universal mission of the Church of Christ.

Proof from Reason.

When we reflect on the purpose of Christ's sojourn amongst men, and the object for which He established His Church, it stands out clear and evident that that Church could not be otherwise than Catholic. Was she not to take up and continue His own mission? And that mission was not solely for the men He addressed in person, the unborn millions of the future had for Him an equal interest. He could not be anxious only for the salvation of those on whose living ears His words fell, and ignore the wants of their grandchildren. The people born in the fourth century had as much claim on His love, and as much need of His message as the people born in the first.

Neither was His mission limited to one nation.

* Acts i. 8.

His doctrine, His sacraments, His saving helps were for the west as for the east, for the ice-bound Laplander as well as for the dwellers in the tents of Palestine. Was He not the Father of all? But within His brief lifetime it was impossible to reach them all, therefore a mission universal in time and universal in space was a first necessity in the constitution of the Church destined to continue His work.

I think in whatever light you view this question, in the light of the prophecies describing the true Church, in the light of the words commissioning her first twelve chiefs, or in that of the purpose for which Her Founder established her, it becomes clearly evident that the true Church established by Christ should bear prominently upon her brow the triple seal of universality.

She should be :—

1. Catholic in time, her mission stretching up through the centuries from the days of Christ till the folding of the heavens.

2. Catholic in place, spreading out to the confines of the universe.

3. Catholic in the multitude of her children.

I hope to convince the reader that the Church to which we belong can produce this warrant of her authority.

# Catholicity of the True Church

## II.

### OUR CHURCH IS CATHOLIC.

Catholic in Time.

"Christianity is not a matter of opinion"—says Cardinal Newman—"it has a bodily occupation in the world. It is one continuous fact or thing. Where is *this thing* in *this age* which in the first age was the Catholic Church? The answer is undeniable: the Church called Catholic now is that very same thing, in hereditary descent, in organization, in principles, in external relations which was called the Catholic Church then. *The name and the thing have ever gone together.*" *

Pentecost.

We shall now take up the chain of centuries link after link from the first moment of her existence till the present hour, and see how in every age this character of Catholicity is with her; how the great Doctors of the past stand forth and bear witness to the truth of Cardinal Newman's words: "The name and the thing have ever gone together". Going back to her very birth-hour when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles at Pentecost, What remarkable gift did He bestow upon them?—The power to speak and understand many languages. Clearly indicating that the message committed to their charge

* "Difficulties of Anglicans," p. 368.

was destined for the various peoples represented by these divers tongues. Here, while the fire still trembled above her Apostles' heads, you see the Church endowed with a Catholicity of speech.

The Apostles' Creed.

We read in the creed drawn up in the first century—a creed still retained in many Protestant bodies—"I believe in the holy Catholic Church". The authors of that creed felt justified in calling her Catholic or universal in her very infancy, when as yet she had scarcely spread beyond the walls of one Eastern city: because as a new ship when fully equipped claims the title "Atlantic Liner," though the foam is only for the first time wetting her prow, so the Church was so fitted for world-wide dominion, so designed for universal conquest, so furnished with all the requisite vital energies, that in the very first years of her birth they justly proclaimed her Catholic.

Unlike the synagogue, they saw she was not built exclusively for a special people. Was not the echo of the Master's words still ringing in their ears?—"Go forth and teach all nations".

Unlike human empires she was not to be the sport of time. Did He not also say she was to last till "the consummation of the world?"

The First Century.

She was now launched on her world-wide

mission and how quickly she justified her baptismal title "Catholic!"

The panting ardour, the heroic zeal of her Apostles sweeping like whirlwinds of fire through the four corners of the earth, the rich outpouring of the Divine Spirit over the hearts of men soon gave her universality in numbers and place. Thirty years after Christ's death St. Paul could say to the Romans, "I give thanks to my God . . . because your faith is spoken of in the entire world".* Spoken of by those who were united with them in faith and sympathy.

Towards the close of that same century, St. Polycarp, who was ordained by St. John, signs himself—"Polycarp, the *Catholic* Bishop of Smyrna".

The Second Century.

We now pass into the second century and listen to St. Irenæus testifying that the religion so marvellously propagated was no vague or changing form of Christianity, but a definite, a harmonious whole which even then had found a home in every land. "This faith and doctrine and tradition preached *throughout the globe* is as uniform as if the Church consisted of one family. . . . The Churches founded in Germany, in the Celtic nations, in the East, in Libya and in the centres of civilization do not differ from each other; but as the sun gives the same light

* Rom. i. 8.

throughout the world, so does the light of faith shine everywhere the same."

The nations enumerated here cover a considerable portion of the then known world, yet he speaks of it as a well-known fact that almost within a hundred years after Christ's death flourishing Churches were to be found in them all. The same father tells us: "Wherever Jesus Christ is there is the *Catholic* Church."

The Third Century.

We come now to the third century and hear Tertullian in his well-known address to the Roman Emperor—"We, Christians, are of yesterday, yet we fill all places belonging to you, the camp, the senate, the forum. Your temples alone we leave empty. If we were to withdraw ourselves to some distant land, the loss of so many citizens would weaken your power. You would seek in vain for men to command. You would shudder over the desolation of a world made empty."

Thus as early as the third century, the extent of the Church was limited only by the frontiers of the Roman Empire. But far beyond even these limits she was destined to spread.

While the reeking sword of persecution was still held above her head, she was raising temples on the banks of the Rhine and Danube, enlisting the philosophy of the East in her service, and

counting her children in tens of thousands amongst all classes, from the general who led Rome's legions to the slave who worked in the mine.

When the empire was falling to pieces, under the foundations of her fairest palaces, under roads that rocked with the tramp of Rome's resistless legions, a new republic was gathering strength in the Catacombs—a republic destined one day to come forth and plant the triumphant banner of the Cross in lands never shadowed by the eagle of Augustus.

Barbarians.

We arrive now at an epoch when a great danger threatened not only to limit her Catholicity, but her very existence seemed at stake. Hordes of barbarians were looking through hungry eyes on the bloated carcass of the tottering empire. They dashed across the frontiers in three successive waves and it seemed as if ten centuries of civilization were about to be submerged, but so far from impairing the Catholicity of the Church they were the very instruments used by God to widen and extend her empire on every side, and to make her name known amongst millions that till then sat in the shadows of death.

Each receding barbarian wave sucked back with it thousands of Christian captives destined to light the torch of faith among, and become

apostles to the rude peoples amongst whom their lives were now cast. They bound with the golden cords of love the men who fettered them with iron, and of these savage hordes they formed obedient Christian nations.

Thus the men who scornfully disdained to bow beneath the imperial yoke meekly submitted to the yoke of Christ. The hands that plucked from its highest flight of pride the Roman eagle, and hurled her proudest standards to the dust, in meek humility clasped the Crucifix or struck the breast of sorrow. And back with the porphyry and gold of Cæsar's palace to their Scythian homes or Germanic forests they carried the seeds of a faith which was to humanize the turbulent passions that swayed and disfigured them, and which was to give a new civilization to Europe.

The Fifth Century.

We have now arrived at the period of the fifth century, and let us listen to the great Doctor of the Western Church speaking on the title Catholic. "It is our duty to hold the Christian religion and the communion of that Church which is called *Catholic* and it is so called not by us but by all its adversaries ; for whether they be so disposed or not, in conversing with others they must use the word 'Catholic' or they will not be understood. . . . Among the many titles that hold me in the bosom of the

Church, is her glorious name Catholic. Though all heretics wish to acquire that name, should a stranger ask, Where do the Catholics assemble? the heretics will not dare to point to any of their places of meeting." *

This test of St. Augustine is admirable and striking: "Should a stranger ask, Where do the Catholics assemble? the heretics will not dare to point to any of their own places of meeting". The argument is as strong and the experiment as simple to-day as in the fifth century.

Put it to the test. Go into London, Manchester or Glasgow. You are surrounded by Protestant churches, many of singular beauty and imposing dimensions, yet ask the first passer-by Where is the Catholic Church? He will never think of directing you to his own Protestant building, he instinctively points to the Church in communion with the Roman See, though it be only a wooden structure in a back lane. Here you have those whose interest it should be to deny or if possible hide it away, bearing unconscious but eloquent testimony to her glorious character—Catholic.

Middle Ages.

We now find ourselves in the Middle Ages, and surely there is no necessity to prove her Catholicity during a period when every throne

* De Vere, "Rel."

in Christendom supported her laws, when ten thousand crusaders' swords leaped from their scabbards at the sound of her voice. When none were to be found outside her pale save the swarthy followers of Mohammed, and the nomad tribes of the East.

The Reformation.

This brings us to the epoch of the Reformation. In the sixteenth century it was thought that not only would her Catholicity be impaired but her very existence imperilled.

A rebel monk sounded the tocsin of revolt on the banks of the Rhine and whole nations fell away from the faith. A partial eclipse took place, but still the sun remained fixed in the heavens, its full brightness being only for a moment obscured. Through the preaching of St. Francis Xavier and his brothers in India and Japan tens of thousands were swept into her fold ; while by the discovery of America her conquests in the new world more than compensated for her losses in the old. For the one great fact that stands out in the Church's history is that, whenever old nations broke from her communion, new peoples rose up to spring to her bosom lest her title Catholic might be dimmed or impaired.

Pondering on her marvellous vitality, Lord Macaulay rises to a height of eloquence never surpassed even by himself. He says : " There is not

and never was on this earth a work of policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church.

"No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the time when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded through the Flavian amphitheatre. She saw the commencement of all the governments and ecclesiastical institutions that now exist in the world, and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all.

"She was great and respected before the Saxon set his foot in Britain, before the Frank had crossed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch and when idols were still worshipped at the temples of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished splendour when some traveller from New Zealand in the midst of a vast solitude takes his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

The Protestant historian just quoted also says: "The Catholic Church is still sending forth missionaries as zealous as those that landed in England with Augustine; confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any preceding age."

Here is a question to be tested by figures.

Catholicity in Numbers.

The official statistics give the number of Catholics as two hundred and sixty-four millions.

Vast as these numbers are, the variety of countries over which they spread, the extent of the earth's space covered by them is more striking still. In Europe she counts one hundred and thirty millions, Germany alone supplies sixteen millions. On the American Continent thirty millions. In Russia eleven millions. In Africa almost three millions, and in the Islands of the Pacific one million.*

Let your eye sweep along those countries which stretch from the snows of Siberia to the Islands washed by the South Pacific, and surely you see a Catholicity of empire that no other institution of the world can hope to rival.

The Vatican.

In our own day, what a striking illustration of her Catholicity as well as her unity did not the Vatican Council of 1870 afford. It was a unique assemblage!

Bishops who came from lands where the solitary palm waves above the tomb of dead civilizations clasped hands with the sons of that vigorous young republic whose name was scarcely known in Europe when the Fathers of Trent assembled.

* These figures are taken from "Jack's Reference Book," 1911, and "Chambers's Encyclopædia".

Men who travelled from the land where the pyramids look down through five thousand years knelt beside those whose infancy was lulled to sleep by the hoarse music of Niagara.

Here you beheld every shade of human colour, men of divers tongues and divers origin, subjects of every form of government, of the absolute monarchy and the free republic. Might they not well exclaim: "Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, to God, in Thy Blood, out of every tribe, and tongue and people and nation".* Here we stand as living proofs before the world of the just claims of our Church to the title Catholic.

Catholic in Place.

Yes, the shadow of her sceptre is flung over every land.

The sound of her Mass bell answers to the first flash of the rising sun that shoots above the ridge of eastern hills. And since it is evening in one country when it is noon in another and dawn in a third, the sunrise and the Mass bell never part company along that bright belt of light that girdles the globe. The Mass and the sunshine are everywhere, they march over the world together. From every point of the path that he cuts through the heavens the sun lets fall his beam on the Church's altars, it gleams on her

* "Apoc.," v. 9.

vestments, it glows ruddy in her chalice, and drapes with its own rich colours the cloud of incense that rises from her sanctuary, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Malachy. "From the rising of sun even to the going down . . . in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation." *

Roman Catholic.

I may be told that there is another body in this country outside ourselves which calls itself Catholic, Yes, calls *itself*, but no one else calls it Catholic, and therein lies all the difference. This is nothing new, it is history repeating itself.

The Fathers have left it on record how up through the centuries each heretical body—some of mushroom growth and tiny dimensions—invariably attempted to usurp and appropriate to itself the glorious title Catholic. But when a fraction of a fragment of a sect seriously proceeds to style itself the great, universal Catholic Church, and patronizingly calls us "Roman Catholics" as if we were some small inferior body, it is difficult to forbear a smile.

We should not, however, lose temper, for when a small boy, a very small boy, steals the clothes of a giant and attempts to put them on himself, we willingly forgive his impertinence for the laughter he affords us.

* Mal. i. 11.

## III.

### NO OTHER CHURCH IS CATHOLIC.

Argument from Reason.

One question alone remains to be answered—Is any other Church Catholic?

Reason itself shows that by the very nature of Protestantism universality is out of the question. Private judgment is fatal to universal conquest. In whose name and by whose authority could an army conquer when every soldier is his own general, free to take his own course as the whim seizes him? How could a Church bring whole empires beneath her sway when within herself she carries the elements of dissolution, and may at any moment split into a thousand different sects? The driving power, the iron strength, the endurance that belongs to a cohesive, well-knit organization like the Catholic Church is here absent.

Look at their very names and see, they unconsciously proclaim that they could not be Catholic in time or place. One takes its name from a man: the Lutherans from Luther, the Wesleyans from Wesley, telling that it was founded, not by Christ, but by some man who lived long centuries after Him. Another takes its name from the country that gave it birth,—the Anglicans from England, the Greeks from

Greece, showing that its mission is not to the universal human family but confined within geographical limits to one particular people.

A religion specially built to suit the peculiar tastes and character of one nation is, by that fact, unfitted for universal acceptance amongst others, differently constituted.

But the Anglican Church was formed for England, the Lutheran for Germany, and the Greek for Russia. Their roots will live in those soils only. Transplant them and they wither.

Does not every fibre of their composition therefore proclaim them not Catholic but local and national.

"The Reformed Churches," says Lord Macaulay, "were merely national Churches. The Church of England existed for England alone. It was an institution as purely local as the Court of Common Pleas. The Church of Scotland likewise existed for Scotland alone, while the operation of the Catholic Church took in the whole world."

Not Catholic in Numbers.

Let us now come to the test of figures.

The largest Christian body outside the Catholic Church is the Greek Church of Russia. It counts at the very most eighty millions. The largest Protestant Church is the Lutheran. While it would be difficult to show that all the Protes-

tant Churches together number one hundred and twenty millions. Now let us by force of imagination try to look on those thousand different Protestant sects as *one body*. Let us even go farther and imagine a corporate union between them and the Greek schismatical Church. Yet the united numbers of all still fall sixty-four millions short of that one, compact organism called the Catholic Church.

To add one word to the argument these figures furnish would only weaken its strength and eloquence.

Objection Answered.

I may be reminded that besides the Catholic Church non-Catholic bodies are to be found everywhere. Yes, with this great difference, that while you have heresy or schism in most countries, you have not the same brand in any two. The Greek Church disdains all relationship with any Protestant body. The German Lutherans repudiate the Protestants of England. While the Anglican anathematizes the Calvinists of Geneva. On the other hand, the Catholic Church is to be found in all lands, and is the same in every land.

Like the branches of the true vine, she spreads far and wide, but each branch springs from the same trunk, and is fed by the sap of a common faith.

In striking contrast then to those various Christian bodies that stand isolated and apart, each confined to the region that saw its birth, is the splendid uniformity which links together the Church's children of every clime. The Polish Catholic discovers no difference in his Irish brother, and the Catholic of Algiers claims complete identity with the citizen of Quebec.

Conclusion.

Here we pause to take a parting glance.

Some short time ago * at the coronation of the Sovereigns who rule over these Islands, London witnessed a pageant of rare magnificence. The vast procession that swept through her streets embraced within its ranks subjects from the most distant portions of the Empire. The bronzed Australian and the turbaned Bengalese, the Canadian who hailed from Our Lady of the Snows, and the sons of sunny Africa marched side by side. It was a gorgeous spectacle. No wonder if the Englishman's heart thrilled with pride at the thought of the vast Empire over which his flag waved, and the variety of races that foregathered under its shadow. Yet that assemblage of different races, those representatives of vast dominions multiplied a hundred times over can be seen, not once in a life-time, but every day of

* On 22 June, 1911. Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary.

the year in the City of Rome. From every point of the compass pilgrims come pouring in to do homage to the lonely King at the Vatican. He looks out over an empire so vast that the proudest kingdom of earth dwindles and grows small by its side. The oldest royal house is a creation of yesterday compared with the long line of sovereigns of which he is heir. He wields a sceptre whose great antiquity goes down through two thousand years.

This it is that makes such a powerful impression on the Protestant visitor to Rome. He finds his little insular Church become paltry and insignificant when he stands in the living brightness of the universal queen. The old city by the Tiber is daily thronged with representatives of the most distant climes. Her sons come from afar. The strength of the Gentiles have gathered to her bosom and kings are walking in the brightness of her rising. Her streets echo the languages of the world, thus perpetuating the pentecostal diversity of tongues and affording to mankind a living and perpetual proof that to the glorious title "Catholic" no rival dares dispute the undoubted claim of the heir of all the ages, the teacher of all the nations, the grand old Mother of Christendom.

# CHAPTER IV.

## THE APOSTOLICITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

### I.

### THE TRUE CHURCH SHOULD BE APOSTOLIC.

"All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." *

THE white clouds of Mount Olivet were soon to envelop the form of Christ: His sorrowing Apostles about to catch the last glimpse of His ascending figure. Before leaving them, however, He constituted them into a separate body of men—into His Church teaching—to continue His own work for the salvation of mankind.

Their office, its nature, and duration are explained in the text placed at the beginning of this chapter.

It follows then that, in casting a glance over

* Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

the various Christian bodies to-day, no Church has a claim on our allegiance which cannot produce her diploma bearing the triple seal of Apostolicity.

1. She must be founded by the Apostles or their successors.

2. She must be able to trace back her pastors' descent, in an unbroken chain, to the Apostles.

3. She must show her doctrine to be identical with that of the Apostles.

If she fail in *any* of these three she cannot be recognized as the true Church.

Apostolic in Origin.

We know from Sacred Scripture that Christ singled out twelve men from the multitude of His disciples.

"He called unto Him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them whom He also named Apostles." * These He formed into a corporate body, formally appointed to a definite office. He empowered them with jurisdiction to offer sacrifice, to loose and bind, to teach and govern in His name and with His authority. They and they alone were the exclusive depositaries of His commission. On them alone He breathed His power, them alone He sent to teach all nations, promising the indwelling of His Holy Spirit to guide, inspire and protect

* Luke vi. 13.

them and their successors till the end of time. On those twelve, as on twelve pillars, He founded His Church.

Now, outside that selected body no man in this world can claim to possess one scrap of Apostolic jurisdiction. Hence it follows that any Church founded since their days, on the authority of man, is merely a human institution. So much for Apostolicity of origin.

Pastors. Before any man then can establish his claim to be an apostolic pastor two things are necessary. *First*, He must be able to trace his spiritual lineage back, in unbroken succession, to the Apostles. As in the Old Law no man dared to put his foot inside the sanctuary who could not prove his descent, link by link in the chain of generations, back to Aaron, the fountain-head of the Synagogue's priesthood ; so, the priest of the New Law must be able to trace his spiritual pedigree by ordination, jurisdiction, etc., back through the Apostles to Christ, the Source from which his powers are derived. *Secondly*, He must have received jurisdiction in all its fullness, with that completeness of power constituted by Christ as essential to the Christian priesthood, nor merely valid ordination, power to offer the Holy Sacrifice, but authority to preach and govern. If even one of these is absent he holds

no commission. Our Lord did not endow His Apostles in piecemeal. "*All* power is given to Me. . . . Going therefore, teach ye all nations." Nor did He order them to transmit it in fragments to His Church. The endowment of His pastors is an undivided whole.

Now, since direct descent from the Apostles, and a completeness of ministry are essential to the Apostolicity of pastors, it follows that, an heretical ministry deriving its authority from a man, a King, or a Privy Council that may be composed of Free-thinkers and Jews, or a schismatic priesthood that receive their jurisdiction from a Russian Czar, are outside the family of the Apostles' successors.

When a Greek Emperor in the ninth century and an English King in the sixteenth usurped spiritual authority—when Cæsar thrust himself into the Chair of Peter—and attempted to dispense a jurisdiction exclusively confined to the charge of the chosen twelve, then the succession was broken, the Apostolic line became extinct.

To no Czar or King did Christ ever say "As the Father sent Me, I send you." An earthly sovereign may indeed loose the chains from a prisoner's body, but from whom did he get authority to strike the fetters off sin-bound souls?

No Cabinet or Privy Council did Christ charge to "teach all nations". Then since nothing can rise higher than its source it is evident that no shred of Apostolic power or authority resides in a Ministry whose only claim is that it received all jurisdiction from a man who never possessed it.

Apostolic in Pastors.

Every pastor requires a mission. When Moses went to Pharaoh he did not demand compliance with his message till he had produced the credential of his mission; the seal that he was a legate duly authorized by God. In the New Testament we see the minutest exactitude in demanding genuine charters of authority before undertaking the labours and jurisdiction of a Divine teacher. Christ did not exempt even Himself. In St. John's Gospel He appeals to His miracles as proofs of His Divinity, but when He comes to delegate His powers to the chosen twelve He is not satisfied with this, for He reminds them that this same mission and jurisdiction He now transmits to them, He Himself received from the Eternal Father. "As the Father hath sent Me, I send you."

St. Paul Insists on a Mission.

St. Paul lays the necessity of a duly authorized mission as the foundation of his argument to the Romans: "How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear

without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they be sent?" *

This reasoning of the Apostle commends itself to the judgment of every thinking man. The care you take in scrutinizing the credentials of any man is in direct proportion to two things :—

(*a*) The importance of the office he undertakes, and

(*b*) The obligation imposed on you to obey him.

Now, that the obligation of obeying the Church of Christ is of the gravest character is beyond all doubt, "He who hears you, hears Me". "If he will not obey the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican."

Regarding the importance of the office, there can be no question. In the affairs of your body you refuse to accept the guidance of every man who places a brass plate on his door, and styles himself a doctor; you must have a genuine assurance that he is truly qualified. But are spiritual quacks to pass unchallenged? For far weightier reasons, should you not demand from the man who presumes to take charge of the interests of your immortal soul, an authorized commission from that select body set aside by

* Rom. x. 14.

Christ to teach all nations in His name, confer His Sacraments, and govern by His authority.

All Ambassadors Must Show Their Credentials.

When an ambassador from London arrives at Paris or Berlin, what is his first duty?—Is it not to produce his papers bearing the genuine seal of the Sovereign. He is not permitted to speak or act officially till these authoritative documents are scrutinized and examined.

I think it is now clear that Apostolicity of Pastors is a first essential in the true Church. "For neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he who is called by God as Aaron was." *

Apostolic in Doctrine.

The true Church should show a complete identity of doctrine with that of the Apostles; adding not a syllable, abstracting not an iota; so that the true Church of to-day should be the echo of the Apostles' voice. If we discover a genuine departure from the Apostles' doctrine, St. Paul tells us how to deal with such a Church: "Though an angel from heaven preach a gospel to you beside that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema". †

Words so strong leave no doubt about the necessity for complete harmony between the teaching of the Apostles, and the teaching of the true Church of Christ.

* Heb. v. 4. † Gal. i. 8.

# Apostolicity of the True Church

I think it has now become abundantly evident that the true Church should bear the triple seal of Apostolicity :—

1. She should be founded by Christ or by His Apostles.

2. Her pastors should derive their authority in direct succession from the Apostles.

3. Her doctrine should be identical with that taught by the Apostles.

I hope to convince the reader that the body called the Catholic Church is Apostolic in origin, in pastors and in teaching.

## II.

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC.

1 and 2. Apostolic in Origin.

The task of proving her Apostolicity of origin, and the Apostolic succession of her pastors is easy, for no man has been found foolish enough to deny either.

The fact which made the great impression on Newman and so largely contributed towards his conversion was that, unlike the sectaries, the Catholic Church was no branch wrenched from a parent trunk, she was the parent trunk itself.

Her long line of Councils, from the first at Jerusalem presided over by Peter, to the last at

Rome presided over by Pius, constitute the very landmarks of history.

Her disputes with hostile Kings, her line of supreme Pontiffs, her trials and her triumphs attest her presence over every page of history during the past two thousand years. The uninterrupted succession of her pastors stretching across the breadth of those ages is so clear and evident that to deny it would be to close the eyes to all historic evidence.

"The proudest royal houses of Europe are but of yesterday compared with the line of supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth, and far beyond the time of Pepin does the august dynasty extend till it is lost in the twilight of fable." *

3. Apostolic in Doctrine.

We now come to the Apostolicity of Doctrine, and at the threshold of the inquiry we are met by the question: By what test do you prove the doctrine of the Church to-day to be Apostolic or not?

First Canon.

We have a simple, conclusive and effective one. Here is the canon of doctrinal criticism recognized in every age.—Whatever is in harmony

* Macaulay, "Ranke's History".

with the uninterrupted chain of Apostolic teaching is true, whatever contradicts it is false.

Now, we have four monuments that afford amplest evidence as to what is the unbroken chain of Apostolic tradition.

Creeds. (*a*) The professions of faith or "creeds" drawn up at various epochs. The Apostles' Creed is a witness to the faith of the first century, the Athanasian Creed testifies to the faith of the fourth, and so on.

Liturgies. (*b*) We have also the "liturgies" which are the external expressions of the faith of various periods. For instance, if I find a chalice, an altar stone, a missal, belonging to the sixth century, I have proof conclusive of that generation's belief in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The Fathers. (*c*) The writings of the Fathers, especially those universally acknowledged as Doctors of the Church, bear witness to the faith of their age when they champion doctrines as truth and assail others as error. For instance, if I find a Father of the Church in the sixth century defending the number of sacraments as seven, does he not bear witness that Christendom in that day believed in seven sacraments?

Councils. (*d*) Finally, as in our own Law Courts we appeal to statutes and decisions of judges as facts that speak for our case; so we have the Councils

of the Church pronouncing what is error, and declaring what is truth.

Now, antiquity speaking through these four tongues is decisive.

Second Canon.

The second canon is supplied by St. Pacian of the fourth century, and it applies with even stronger force to our own times than his. Here is his golden rule to distinguish truth from error : " Error is always new and various in form, while truth is unchangeable and equally held by all persons, at all times, and in all places ". Let the reader be good enough to keep these two canons well before his mind : *Conformity with antiquity* and *The unchangeable nature of truth :* it is by these we shall test the Apostolicity of the Catholic and non-Catholic Churches.

1. Conformity with Antiquity.

Let us apply the first—conformity with antiquity. If there is anything a Catholic is particularly proud of, it is that he can challenge the world to produce, from any period of the past, an authentic condemnation on any article of the faith he professes.

Read aloud to him every creed from the Apostles' Creed up, and the declarations of every Council, from the Council of Jerusalem to that of the Vatican ; and to every article of faith so read out he can firmly answer Credo—I believe.

So far from fearing inquiry, the Church wel-

comes it, for she knows that every fresh field of discovery supplies fresh arguments to her claim, and swells the chorus of testimony to the Apostolicity of her teaching.

Let the antiquarian ransack the caverns of the Catacombs, overhaul libraries and museums, drag forth tablets, rituals and vestments, monuments of the faith of any epoch passed and she proudly points to the fact that every syllable of that teaching can be heard in her sanctuaries to-day. The rich treasures of her Apostolic teaching never come out more clearly than when contrasted with the genuine expressions of the faith of the past, are never more evident than when under the white search-light of honest criticism.

Irish Valleys.

Our own country happily supplies us with a striking illustration of this truth.

We believe in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass ; we are surrounded by persons who do not. Let the relative claims of both be put to a simple test. Our Irish valleys are dotted over with ruined churches of every century almost from the days of St. Patrick to our own. Go to them and see how those solemn sentinels raise their hoary heads testifying to the Apostolicity of our faith.

You find in the church of the sixth or the tenth century alike, an *altar*, an *ambræ* for the sacred vessels, and *sedilia* for the ministers at

High Mass. Come outside to the tombstones lying around, strip them of their moss, and you reveal the outlines of a chalice, a host, or a monstrance. Wherever you turn your eyes, those venerable watchmen keep solemn vigil by the Apostolic faith of antiquity, and bear its witness upon their mossy breasts. Could your voice penetrate the green sod, and clothe once more with flesh and blood the bones of your own ancestor who went to sleep in the ninth century, and tell him we are now informed that belief in the Real Presence and the Holy Mass is not Apostolic doctrine. This man, rising up from an age a thousand years nearer to the Apostles than ours—an age when the aroma of Apostolic tradition still lingered in the air—will tell you that a priest without a sacrifice, a temple without an altar, a sanctuary without anything sacred seem to be contradiction in terms, and such things were never heard of in his time. When he was alive all Christendom believed in the Mass and never questioned it. He points to the figure of the chalice on his tomb bearing mute but eloquent testimony to his words. Such was the teaching, he says, our Bishops received from Patrick, and Patrick from Celestine, and Celestine from Peter, and Peter from Christ.

Second Canon.

Let us now apply the second canon—the

unchangeable nature of truth. On this we need waste few words, because our adversaries prove our case by actually making our conformity with this canon a reproach. They say, the Catholic Church never changes, her motto is *Semper eadem*, or, as they put it—"she is non-progressive". We admit it, we do more, we glory in it. Let us go to the root of the question and not be deceived by the jugglery of words.

What is the meaning of progress?—Is it not the going from an imperfect towards a perfect state? Surely no one will quarrel with that definition. Yet it follows from such definition that a Church already perfect cannot make progress.[1] She is already in possession of a state towards which progress tends, and to move from that position would not be perfection but a step towards imperfection.

Upon a theological as upon a mathematical truth, time can make no change, two and two made four in the first century, and the roll of ten thousand years over that simple truth cannot make it five. The early Christians believed in one God. Two thousand years have not made God more than one. The sun has not changed his path in the heavens for the past six

[1] To safeguard the reader against misconception let me say that the phrase "the Church can make no progress" is not meant to exclude that kind of progress called doctrinal development, concerning which the constitution of the Vatican Council quotes Vincent of Lerins to show that there is truly a progress (profectus) although "*in eodem sensu et dogmate*".—AUTHOR.

thousand years. Why?—Because the finger that traced it in the beginning was Divine, and being perfect from the beginning it cannot change. The word "progress" has no meaning when applied to perfect things.

Christ promised that the Spirit of Truth should abide with His Church for ever. Can she then declare as true in one generation what she brands as false in another? Can God be deceived or can time add to His knowledge? Can man improve on His work? Yes, when he will add fire to the sun, give a richer perfume to the lily or paint the heavens with a deeper blue.

So that, when a person boasts of his Church being progressive he declares that the truths she held yesterday she abandons to-day, and the truths she holds to-day she may throw overboard to-morrow. He declares her a man-made Church, a creature of time, a human institution bearing on her forehead the hall-mark of clay.

The Church is Progressive.

There are ways in which the Church is very progressive indeed.

She marched not only abreast but far ahead of her times when she raised humanity out of the mire of pagan corruption into the pure light and freedom of Christian civilization.

But when a portion of mankind revolts from her guidance, breaks down the barriers of moral restraint, reopens the sluice-gates of vice,

quenches star after star in the heaven of the soul, and recedes to the paganism from which she rescued it, calling that process "progress," with such progress she declines to go. She came from above and her motto for mankind must ever be Excelsior.

Another Kind of Progress.

In another sense also she is progressive. Her mission is Divine but worked out through human instruments. She used the roads of pagan Rome to expedite the message of her missionaries, and the common language of the Empire to announce it. So to-day, she looks with kindly eye on all inventions and discoveries. Of them she will in the future absorb and utilize all that is good and serviceable. The infidel astronomer now wrapt in his observatory, marking with his telescope the march of the midnight stars; or the scientist now wrestling with the terrors of the polar seas, or deciphering the mystic language of the rocks, little dreams that he is strengthening her arm to grapple with the future forces of infidelity; forging cutting steel for the armoury of her defensive weapons.

In this sense she is indeed progressive. But ask her to vary her articles of faith—change her pillars of belief. No, never an iota.

We now come to the final question. Is any other Church Apostolic?

## III

### NO OTHER CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC.

Not Apostolic in Origin.

"No other form of Christianity," says Newman, "but the present Catholic communion has a pretence to resemble, even in the faintest shadow, the Christianity of antiquity." *

Greek Church.

Is the Greek Church Apostolic in origin?—It was founded just eight hundred years too late. The Apostles had finished their work and gone to their reward, and it would take a loud voice to penetrate those eight centuries and give the authors of the Greek schism their mission. It is true the ordination of a Greek minister is valid, but orders, and the power of using them are very different things. Should a London judge find himself in Dublin, he would remain a judge but could not exercise the functions of that office. If an ambassador, having received his commission, be guilty of rebellion, will the State recognize his powers? Will the King countersign his signature?

To have Apostolicity of pastors more is required than mere material succession. When a schismatic Bishop occupies the see of a true successor of the Apostles, and robes himself in his vestments, he is indeed a material unit in the

* "Difficulties of Anglicans," p. 393.

line of succession, but all vital and organic connexion has ceased. And, in this, all the difference lies.

By schism, the Greeks are completely cut off from Peter, the head source of authority and jurisdiction, and the stream cut from its fountain flows no longer. Your arm while in connexion with your body is animated by the soul, the spirit flows through it ; sever the arm from the body, Will the soul flow out after it?—No, the spirit remains behind and the limb dies. Cut a telegraph wire and the message from the electric centre travels to the gap but will not pass across it.

A Greek priest might pronounce the words of absolution, but the words would die on the air.* The stream of power that accompanies these words from the lips of a Catholic priest would here be absent. He belongs to a Church that is a limb indeed but an amputated one ; a branch indeed but a torn one. He is the ambassador in rebellion, his seal is worthless, his commission cancelled.

Is the Reformed Church Apostolic.

The Apostles are dead nineteen hundred years, and it is only three centuries since the world first heard of the Reformers. The Claim of any branch of those Churches to Apostolic origin is

* In the case of a person dying, the Church withholds no absolving power from any priest that may be present, even though he be in schism—"Lest any one should perish".

met by a most serious, and, as it appears, an insuperable objection. It is this: On their own admission, they differed from all Christendom between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries; they admit a gap of four hundred years. How is that break bridged over? Where is the chain of continuity between them and the Apostolic Church? How can they claim relationship with a Church from which they are separated by a chasm of four centuries? I may be told that all Christendom had defected and become corrupt; and secondly, that the new leaders were called to establish a pure and perfect Church. Let us examine these two statements separately.

Had Christendom corrupted?

We take the Bible and read the promise of Christ to His Church: "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world". Now upon the words of man I am asked to believe that the God of all Truth broke that promise; He was not with her all days. I am asked to believe more—That under terrible penalties He commanded humanity to hear and obey that Church, and yet for four hundred years had permitted her lips to hold a message of falsehood and corruption. Finally, that the spouse for whom He delivered Himself up that she might be without spot or wrinkle—that spouse He had abandoned and permitted to be eaten into with the leprosy of corruption. To

believe all that in the light of the flat contradiction that comes from the very Book to which the Reformers so confidently appeal, is just too much for sane reason.

Was the Reformation Established by God.

That the Reformers had a commission to establish a perfect Church is met by a difficulty equally serious.

Men coming with such an extraordinary message should produce their letters of credit from him who sent them—their commission either from those who immediately preceded them, or directly from God.

With those who immediately preceded them they declared they had nothing in common. Then they should have their commission from God.

Now God never abolished an existing order of things to establish another without furnishing His agents with the authority of miracles. When Moses went to Pharaoh miracles constituted his credentials. Christ Himself appeals to them as His warrant for abolishing the Old and establishing the New Law. When He sent His Apostles out into the world miracles formed their passports: their very shadows, handkerchiefs dipped in their blood worked wonders. And curiously enough Luther gives this as the rule for testing the Anabaptists of Muncer. "If they say they are from God, let them prove

it by miracles, if not, reject them." Now have the Reformers ever produced this credential for the authority of their mission?—They have never pretended to claim it: more, many of them scoff at the bare notion of a miracle, at least since the days of the Apostles and their immediate successors.

Identity with Early Church.

We have tested the Reformed Church by comparison with that portion of Christendom from which it differs. Let us now compare it with that portion with which the Reformers claim the identity. "Look to the Early Church," they say, "when it was pure and uncorrupted and you will find it one with the Reformation, and telling deadly against the Catholics.

We accept the challenge. Nay, if we had no other proof of the divinity of the Catholic Church we might be content to stand or fall by this appeal. The evidence it affords is unanswerable. It is fatal. If the Reformed Church be identical with the Primitive Church, the errors condemned by the Primitive Church should be condemned with equal emphasis by Protestantism to-day. That is evident. Now what are the facts? Between the day of Pentecost and the year seven hundred there are twenty heresies condemned by the Primitive Church.

Are those errors repudiated by Protestants

to-day? So far from it, each and every one of those heresies can be actually found among articles of Protestant belief.

Are those twenty errors held or tolerated by the Catholic Church to-day?—To each and every one of them she says Anathema. She reprobates them. She affixes her seal of condemnation to the sentence pronounced by the Primitive Church.

Which Church has now proved her blood-relationship with the Apostolic Church of the Fathers, and which Church is discovered in the ranks of her enemies?

Newman.

This argument is unanswerable. This argument shook Oxford sixty years ago, and forced its most gifted men to find peace in the bosom of the Catholic Church. Let the brightest particular star among them all speak. Newman, making a close study of the Early Church of the Fathers, was so struck by its identity with the Catholic Church of to-day, and the identity of Protestantism to-day with the heresies that assailed the Primitive Church, that he laid down his pen and bowed his head: the argument was overpowering. He says: "It was difficult to make out how Eutychians or Monothelites were heretics, unless Protestants and Anglicans were heretics also. It was difficult to condemn

the Popes of the sixteenth century without condemning the Popes of the fifth. The principles and proceedings of the Church now were those of the Church then ; the principles and proceedings of heretics then were those of Protestants now.

"I found it so, almost fearfully, there was an awful similitude between the records of the past and the feverish chronicle of the present. The shadow of the fifth century was on the sixteenth, it was like a spirit rising from the troubled waters of the old world with the shape and lineaments of the new.

"What was the use of continuing the controversy or defending my position, if after all I was but forging arguments for Arius and turning devil's advocate against the much-enduring Athanasius, and the majestic Leo. Be my soul with the saints and shall I lift my hand against them? Sooner may my right hand forget her cunning and wither outright, ere I should do aught but fall at their feet in love and in worship whose image was continually before my eyes, and whose musical words were ever in my ears and on my tongue." *

Is the Reformed Church Apostolic?

The limits of this chapter will not permit us to examine more than two points, but they will be amply sufficient.

* Difficulties of Anglicans, p. 387.

For a thousand years and more the world never heard of a man bold enough to deny the evident meaning of these four words: "This is My Body". Berengarius arose to scandalize Christendom by his denial in the eleventh century, but the cancer of his heresy was cut from the Church by Pope Leo IX, at the Council of Vercelli, and the author died in penance. Christendom rested and at the time of the Reformation the world in every part held the Apostolic doctrine on this point as we do to-day.

The Reformers at the time of Elizabeth denied, as the vast majority of Protestants the world over to-day deny, the Real Presence, and every century from Pentecost to that hour cried out in protest.

The absurdity of their denial became evident in a short time. When they refused the plain interpretation of these four words accepted by the Catholic Church, they were bound of course to supply their own meaning of them.

What happened?—Within a few years they discovered no less than a hundred and twenty different and contradictory meanings of the four words: "This is My Body". All those one hundred and twenty meanings were mutually

destructive. So that if A was true, B was false, and so on.

The Catholic theologian might fold his arms and let the one hundred and twenty, like Aaron's serpents, devour each other.

"This is My Body," says Christ, "which shall be delivered for you." The Reformers must hold that it was His real Body. For if these words—"This is My Body" are wrenched from their obvious meaning and made to signify —"This represents My Body," see the fix in which they would find themselves. They would then have no right to assume that the words—"The Word was God" did not also mean—"The Word was the representation of God," or again, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," do not stand for—"This man is a figure of My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased".

The Reformers cannot claim the right to a forced and arbitrary interpretation, and deny the same right to others. They cannot have it both ways.

If then, as they stoutly maintain against the Socinians, it is blasphemous to say that, "The Word was only a representation of God," it is equally blasphemous for themselves to tamper with the words of the institution of the Blessed

Sacrament, and interpret them to mean that, the Eucharist is only a figure of Christ's Body and Blood. Here is their dilemma: there is no escape from it.

They are bound then to hold that the Body Christ held in His hands on Holy Thursday night was identical with the Body that hung on the Cross on Good Friday. Did he not say: "This is My Body, *which shall be delivered for you*"? But when they assert that it was not a real but a spiritual body of Christ that was in the host at the Last Supper, they are forced also to assert that it was not a real but a figurative body that hung on the Cross on Good Friday.

"This is My Blood which shall be shed for you." When they assure us that, in the chalice at the Last Supper the Blood was figurative and not real, they are forced to say also that it was only figurative blood that flowed on the Cross, for Christ tells us that the Blood in the chalice was the Blood to be shed for us.

Here, at one sweep, they do away with the atonement. A strange position for "Christians" to find themselves in! Yet this is strictly logical. Christ was making His last will and testament, and He tells us that He leaves us His Body. The Reformers assure us that it was not His Body but a figure of it he left us.

But should the reader test their sincerity by leaving a line in his will, "This is my house which I leave to you". If the executor, insisting that this was figurative language, were to present them with a photograph or image of the house, how very quickly they would insist on the natural interpretation of words, and look upon the meaning forced on those words of the will, by the executor, as a clumsy joke or an attempt to cheat them.

St. Paul says, "He who eats or drinks unworthily is guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ". How could he be guilty of a real body if he only dishonoured a figurative one? What judge will condemn you for murder because you happened to stick a knife not through a man but through his picture?

If for one moment we admit such jugglery with words, human speech ceases to have meaning, and become chaos.

Divorce.

After one thousand five hundred years the Church withstands divorce and upholds the indissolubility of the marriage tie. The Reformers first divorced Christ from His Church, and then man from his wife.

If there was ever an occasion when the glory of the Church shone with greater lustre than another, it was in the stand she took, and the

sacrifices she made rather than tamper with, or whittle down this Apostolic tradition.

Germany and almost the whole of Northern Europe were wrenched from her communion: half Switzerland was gone: France was grievously imperilled. Every day brought tidings of fresh disaster to the Vatican. The tide of revolt kept rolling onwards, and no man might mark its limits. The Papacy was hard pressed, and it seemed as if Catholic Christendom was breaking up on every side.

In her hour of sore anguish there was one nation to which the Church might look for help, one power capable of staying the onward roll of destruction—England.

Henry VIII was perhaps the most powerful monarch that ever sat on an English throne. His father left him uncounted wealth. Not a spark of disaffection, the shadow of no claimant disturbed his repose. Parliament was at his feet, and the nobles that might thwart his plans had perished in the Rose Wars. Feudalism was in its last gasp, and the powers of modern democracy had not received birth.

The friendship and assistance of such a king would be incalculable. Both might be purchased if the Church recognized his divorce from Catherine. She could not: she dare not; for by doing

so she would abandon one item of Apostolic doctrine. This she could not do were she to gain the whole earth. She was commissioned to teach all things whatsoever Christ had commanded her, and amongst them divorce found no place ; but rather " What God hath joined let no man separate ".

In the hour of darkness and gloom she dashed aside the proffered hand when it could only be purchased by the betrayal of Apostolic teaching.

More, if the mystic veil of the future were uplifted and if upon her eyes prophetic vision was poured, and she could see the multipled calamities her refusal entailed, she dare not abandon that one defenceless woman clinging to her feet, and claiming her protection.

If she looked and saw that King with his million subjects, their great Universities, and rich Abbeys, and stately Cathedrals pass away from her control ; if she saw that vast nation transformed from faithful children into deadliest foes—her answer still should be :—Let them go ; by this injured woman I must take my stand.

If with blanched cheek and quivering lip her eyes beheld the streams of English and Irish blood, and the mangled corpses of their martyrs rolling down the purple tide : if with agonized ears, she heard the crash of falling churches, and

the clank of prison gyves, if listening low, she heard from the shores of faithful Ireland the muffled wail of a trampled nation sounding like a death-bell over the Western waters. Even so, her answer still should be :—No power on earth shall wrench from my lips a lie. By this injured woman I will take my stand.

If, looking down the vista of time, the vision of our own days rose up before her, and she saw this once Catholic nation lashing herself into a very frenzy of delight to welcome and clasp Garibaldi to her bosom, pouring tens of thousands into his coffers, and arming his cut-throats with English rifles. If all that ghastly vision passed before her gaze, she could only answer :—An Apostolic message was committed to my charge, corruption must never touch it. Let the monarchs of earth uphold the doctrine of divorce with forests of bayonets and rivers of blood, still by this injured woman I take my stand, and were I to perish in the breath, I hurl my fiercest curse upon that doctrine damned as hell.

At each stage of the inquiry the light grew brighter on the mind of our anxious friend whose train of thought was set in motion by the clamouring chimes of the opposing churches.

As he proceeded from mark to mark of the FOUR that were to characterize the true Church of Christ, as he perceived them to be clearly and evidently possessed by one Church alone, and as he searched in vain for them among other Christian bodies, the accumulating evidence grew irresistible and the unshaken conviction seized him that THE STRAIGHT PATH led clear cut and direct to the door of the Catholic Church.

There he stands. Torturing doubts have vanished and luminous certitude now fills the mind once torn by anxious thought.

One more step.

Unlike the churches he previously knew, the Catholic Church has a head, and a head claiming special prerogatives. In order then that no shadow of ignorance regarding the head or body of that divine organism may linger on his mind, we now invite him to open the second book of this volume, and study the two great privileges of Peter's successor—The Infallibility of the Pope and The Supernatural Life of the Apostolic See.

# BOOK THE SECOND.

## THE POPE AND HIS PREROGATIVES

# CHAPTER I.

## WHAT INFALLIBILITY MEANS.

FORTY-FIVE years have rolled by since the Vatican Council declared the Successor of St. Peter to be infallible, that is, protected from error when, speaking as Supreme Pastor, he defines as a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the whole Church.

Before proceeding to prove this article of Catholic truth let us dispel some false notions concerning it.

New Definition not a new Article of Faith.

A new definition, so far from being a new article of faith,[1] is but a public declaration of an article of faith as old as Christianity itself.

Magna Charta receives no new addition whenever one of its principles is interpreted by authority, or applied to a particular case. In civil law if a controversy arise about a consti-

[1] An article of faith is defined by St. Thomas as "A revealed supernatural truth which is distinct in itself from other such truths but which unites with them to form the organic whole of Christian teaching" such as those truths contained in the Apostles' Creed.

tutional point the Supreme Tribunal is applied to. They decide, they lift the question out of obscurity, clear above the mists of doubt and smoke of contention but make no new addition to the constitution, no new law. They declare and bring into prominence a point that was always the law and coeval with the constitution itself. When the sunbeam falling upon a rosebud enlarges, expands and gives full development to its leaves, we do not say that the sun has created new leaves—no, it only unfolds those that already nestled there ; so, circumstances may compel the Church to define or bring into greater prominence some article in the deposit of faith entrusted to her keeping, but to add to, or subtract from, that deposit is beyond her power. The faith of the Catholic Church had received its final addition before St. John, the last of the Apostles, died. An illustration will make all this clear.

In the year 325 a Great Council assembled at Nicæa. For what purpose?—To define that Jesus Christ was truly God. Will those who taunt the Catholic Church with multiplying beliefs every time an article of faith is defined seriously maintain that the Christian world did not believe in the Divinity of our Lord till 325?

Why, there were bishops present whose bodies bore marks of mutilation and imprisonment in testimony of their belief in it. Every sod of the empire had been reddened with martyr blood, and the breath of the Catacombs was still fresh upon the Church because of this belief. It was surely no new article of faith ; yet for the first time, it is now solemnly defined. Why? Because the Arian heretics were denying it and insinuating the poison of doubt into the minds of thousands, thus sapping the faith of Christendom. Then the voice of the Church by solemn definition proclaimed it, in order to brand error, clear away doubt, and strengthen the wavering. The definition indeed was new, but the doctrine defined coeval with the Church itself. Hence when a Catholic is told that the Pope makes his faith, he may ask in turn, does the banker mint the sovereigns he guards? or does the judge make the law he expounds?

The Pope is the custodian and expounder of our faith, but certainly not its author. That office belongs to One alone—Christ.

Infallibility 1870?

Was the infallibility of the Pope first heard of in 1870? Assuredly not! But it was then defined, you will say ; yes, but why? Because the Catholics of that time were faced with the painful fact that a doctrine acknowledged from

the beginning was now being seriously challenged even by some within the fold, and this in spite of the fact that from the days of the Apostles the Pope's dogmatic decisions had always been regarded by the Church as final and infallible. The Vatican Council says : " We, adhering faithfully to the tradition handed down from the commencement of the Christian faith, etc. ".

In proof of this let me point to three significant instances.

The Pelagian heresy raged through the Western Church in the fifth century. Owing to the efforts of St. Augustine, conferences were held between the Catholic and Pelagian bishops. Both sides submitted the controversy to the Pope. When his decision was announced, St. Augustine in an immortal phrase echoed the universal belief of the Church of the day : " Rome has spoken, the cause is finished ".*

The French Jansenists.

When in 1713 Clement XI condemned the revived Jansenism of Quesnel, some ecclesiastics as well as civil magistrates made an audacious appeal from the Pope to a General Council. For this act they were excommunicated ; and when they attempted to kick against the goad, they brought upon their heads the condemnation of four cardinals, a hundred bishops, and scores of thousands of ecclesiastics from France alone—

* While these are not the identical words used by St. Augustine the phrase is substantially his.

morally the entire French Church ; while the entire Church of Europe reprobated their action as "schism and foolish revolt". Here you have the Catholic world proclaiming that from the Pope's decision there is no appeal. Rome had spoken, the case was closed.

Immaculate Conception.

In 1854 the Pope proclaimed the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin an article of faith. Did any portion of the Catholic world then say that he exceeded the limits of his powers? or call his definition into question?

Here we have three official acts belonging essentially to his domain as Infallible teacher. These acts are exercised on his sole authority without the aid of a General Council ; yet, mark what followed. Previous to the Papal pronouncement, passionate controversy raged round each of those questions, but the moment the decision was spoken, every breath of controversy died, the boldest champions abandoned their opinions ; and on each occasion the Catholic world repeated the sentiment of St. Augustine : "Rome has spoken, the cause is finished".

History of the Subject.

For fourteen hundred years the Pope's infallibility was never questioned by the faithful. Then arose a period of confusion with rival claimants for the Papal throne, and the theory first saw the light that a General Council was

above the Pope, and had power to annul or modify his teaching. In other words, that Peter's brethren were to confirm Peter—the flock to feed the shepherd. This theory was condemned by five Pontiffs as "execrable"; and for long years no more was heard of it. Two centuries ago it burst again into dangerous activity in France. Lawyers, politicians, and courtier-clerics were anxious to exalt the power of the King, and curtail that of the Pope; to give the temporal prince not only the sceptre of state, but also the keys of the sanctuary.

Those men strove, in a large measure, to withdraw the French nation from control of, and dependence on, the Holy See. As a first step in that direction it was necessary to weaken the prestige of the Papacy by enacting that Papal definitions should only be deemed infallible when sanctioned by a General Council. This movement was called "Gallicanism": Before 1870 the question had begun to assume a dangerous character. It received a powerful ally, as well as its greatest condemnation in the modern spirit of secularism. If these two forces could work out their purpose the Spouse of Christ would find herself chained to the chariot wheels of Cæsar; the arm of God's Vicar would be tied up, and his voice robbed of authority.

Civil marriage, godless education, an infidel press and socialistic philosophy might then run riot, for God would have ceased to count as a factor in a world machined by the apostles of rationalism.

Had this movement gone unchecked, had the Pope's infallibility not been solemnly defined as of faith by the authoritative voice of the Church, and had a General Council been our only official guide, what a sad plight we should find ourselves in to-day! Secular encroachment in every land, a press teeming with theories subversive of Christian principles and the very elements of morality, and the most cherished truths truculently attacked. To whom could we appeal? A General Council is not the remedy for an instant and pressing danger, more especially now that the one spot on earth where it could meet with perfect freedom—the Papal States—are in robber hands. Was every avenue of error to remain open, was vice to disport itself unrebuked till a General Council could assemble?

The Vatican Fathers met, and not a day too soon. As the full brilliancy of the diamond is never revealed till the darkest moment, so was it with the Papacy.

When France was weakly withdrawing her troops from protecting the Holy See, when the

boom of Victor Emmanuel's cannon could be almost heard rolling across the Campagna, when the shadows were gathering thick around him in apparently his weakest hour, the Pope found himself surrounded by 767 bishops gathered from every point of the compass. They boldly proclaimed the Sovereign Pontiff's privileges, and asserted his claims. The declaration cleared the atmosphere of doubt, it unfettered the hands of Christ's Vicar, it swept clear from the Church all political influence—Gallicanism, Cæsarism, Nationalism, it put the last rivet in the shield of Catholic freedom. As a king, with states, or in chains, surrounded by a consular throng of mitred heads, or in the solitude of the prison, when the Pontiff now speaks "Ex Cathedra" we know the infallible voice, and our path is clear.

The Decree.

The definition of the Vatican Council says: "The Pope is infallible when, discharging his office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals *to be held by the whole Church*". Mark these words, the subject of his definition must be faith or morals, so that mathematics, physics, etc., are outside the direct scope of his office. It must be the faith or morals to be held or observed

not by a particular nation but by the whole Church.

In what capacity must he speak? In one, and one only, namely, as "pastor and teacher of all Christians". As a private theologian he may publish a volume, but no guarantee of infallibility attaches to his decisions in it. As a matter of fact Benedict XIV, a distinguished theologian, published works, and many of his opinions are attacked or denied by the schoolmen of to-day. He may as a friend exhort and even advise all Christians, but it is only when he speaks not as a friend but as Supreme Pastor he is infallible. As theologian, as mere ordinary of the diocese of Rome, or as head of a congregation, his decisions are not invested with infallibility. The privilege belongs not to the man but to his office. We rely not on his learning or personal rectitude but on the promise of Christ sheltering his words from error when as Supreme Guide he directs the universal Church. Thus, we see the privilege is given to the Pope not for his glory but for our security.

Impeccability.

"Catholics believe the Pope cannot commit a sin" is an ignorant sneer sometimes heard from the lips of people we might credit with knowing better. Do Catholics believe any such thing?

They do not. Does the definition of the Vatican Council imply sinlessness or impeccability in the Pope? It does not. God permitted even prophecy to flow through sinful lips as in the case of Caiaphas. Here is a case in point that strikingly illustrates our contention, and shows the broad distinction between the man and the official, how the personal sinfulness or sanctity of the man cannot affect his office.

When Jesus calls Lazarus forth from the tomb the fame of that miracle rings through the country; in the city nothing else is spoken of and the Pharisees are beside themselves with rage. They assemble a council of blood, "From that day, therefore, they devised to put Him to death".

The passion of murder burned in every heart gathered around that council board, and Caiaphas the *man* was as deep in guilt as the rest. Yet when he spoke as *high priest* his crimes and evil passions were powerless to affect his utterance; prophecy flowed from his lips, his message was for the world and it remained uncoloured and untainted by the foul channel through which it flowed.

"It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not" (John xi.).

Here is a person actually engaged in a scheme to plan murder, yet when he speaks officially the Holy Ghost not only guards his words against error but inspires the thoughts he utters.

The Evangelist adds, "He spoke not from himself, but prophesied, he being high priest for that year". Mark the distinction between "himself" and "the high priest". At the moment that Caiaphas the man is engaged in the darkest crime that ever shadowed this earth, Caiaphas the high priest is uttering the sublime decrees of heaven.

How absurd then to say that, because we hold the Pope to be infallible when officially he guides the entire Church, we thereby imply that in private life he is lifted above all human frailties.

In the new dispensation God has so safeguarded His sacraments as, in a sense, to lift them above and render their effects completely independent of the minister who dispenses them. An absolution pronounced by the guilty Judas would have precisely the same effect on the soul of a penitent as the absolving words flowing from the lips of John.

So a priest may be the instrument of grace and absolve another while in sin himself.

The weakness of His first Pope became a proverb, yet Christ made him the rock from which

the whole Church was to receive firmness. Why? Because He bestows the gift of prophecy, of orders, of infallibility, not for the prophet, priest, or pope, but for the people. We can then well understand why He does not require sinlessness as an essential in the channels through which He pours His gifts on the people. If He did that He would defeat His own ends. If, before we receive a prophecy, or before we receive a sacrament, or a definition, it were necessary for us to ascertain the state of the soul of the man through whose ministry God's gift was to pass, the office and the gift would be rendered all but worthless because of the impossibility of verifying the condition attached. Besides, it is a rule with God to choose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty. If God had selected an angel to direct His Church and unfold His teaching then we should perhaps have been inclined to attribute the gift of inerrancy not to God's protecting providence but to the natural qualities of His minister—the angel. But when He selects a mere man stripped of all superhuman advantages then the splendour of His protecting care shines forth.

When, then, a certain class of writers and public speakers point to the personal blemishes

of such and such a pope and triumphantly ask "Where was his infallibility?" they succeed only in showing their ignorance of even rudimentary Catholic teaching.

Yet though not rendered impeccable by their office the Supreme Pontiffs were, as a rule, men of eminent sanctity. Their bitterest foes cannot point to more than a dozen whose lives were not in keeping with their state, a small average out of 259 when we consider that among the little band of twelve apostles one Judas was found. Those few become mere specks when counterbalanced by the eminent virtues of the others, seventy-nine of whom have merited the honours of canonization. Benedict XV goes to confession like the humblest member of his world-wide flock, each morning before ascending the altar he strikes his breast in the confiteor, crying "I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed". At the offertory, he offers up the Host "for his innumerable sins, offences, and negligences". This does not look like claiming exemption from human infirmity.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

#### PETER WAS INFALLIBLE.

Now that we have cleared the subject of some of the false notions ignorance and malice have gathered around it, and have a definite idea of what the Pope's infallibility really does mean, we proceed to show how Sacred Scripture in the most definite manner clearly establishes Peter's claim to this prerogative. We will, however, better appreciate the full significance of the sacred texts that prove Peter's privilege when the mind is gradually led up to them by a description of the scenes and events that surrounded each of the triple investiture.

Let us take the first: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it".

The Galilean mission closed with dramatic splendour when Christ fed the multitude with seven loaves and a few little fishes. It was the parting flash from the Divine; the final gift before turning His back on a faithless people.

" He came unto His own and His own received Him not."

Henceforth Jerusalem and the awful tragedy awaiting Him occupy His thoughts ; and Galilee daily recedes into the distance. That evening, accompanied by His disciples, He stepped into a boat ; its prow turns towards the northern shores in the direction of Cæsar Philippi. They are seeking the sweet solitude of silent nature for rest and prayer. Even then the *tenebræ* of Holy Week began to cast their shadows. His heart and speech from henceforth are filled with the Passion. " From that time, Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the ancients and scribes and chief priests ; and be rejected and put to death, and the third day rise again " (Matt. xvi. 21).

The boat glides over the placid waters, under a sky that deepens with the crimson hues of sunset, onward by the familiar shores where Peter and Andrew played as boys. The snowy crests of Hermon and Thabor tower in the distance. At last the keel grates on the pebbly shore and Christ steps on the beach.

It was a scene of restful beauty. The fertile valley that sloped down from the mountain foot to the lake teemed with luxuriant growth. The

festooning vines and autumn blooms are on every side. The broken music of the cascade and fountain soothe the weary ear.

Here six days are spent in rest and prayer. On one of those days when the apostles were scattered through the valley, some pondering on the miracles they had lately witnessed, some others brooding on the dark troubles that loomed in the horizon of the future. He calls them.

A momentous hour is at hand. He is about to found His Church and invest His first Pope with supreme authority. He looks into their faces and calmly asks : " Whom do men say the Son of man is ? " The answer was a sad one. Few had recognized Him as the Messiah. " The light shone in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it."

Then came the question charged with tremendous issues : " Whom do you say I am? " You whom I have trained. You who are witnesses to My life and miracles. On the reply to that question, humanly speaking, the destinies of the world hung. All are asked but one and one alone answers—Peter.

Proof I. " Simon Peter answered and said : Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering, said to *him :* Blessed art *thou*, Simon Bar-Jona : because flesh and blood hath not re-

vealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee : that thou art Peter : and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it " (Matt. xvi. 15).

It was a custom with Jewish teachers when a pupil gave an extraordinary exhibition of learning to bestow a new name upon him as a reward. On more than one occasion God adopted a similar proceeding.

On the solemn day He made Abram and Sarai the fountains from which future nations should flow, He changed their names to Abraham, which means the father of a multitude, and Sarah, a princess ; these names foreshadow the fecundity and the dignity of their offspring. When Jacob victoriously wrestled with the angel, as a reward and as a reminder that he should ever prevail against men, God bestowed on him the title " Israel," (as a prince thou hast power with God). Remember these titles are not empty sounds, they express the nature of the new gift or dignity conferred.

Christ here bestows a new name on His first Pope, and, following the analogies just quoted, it must bear a strong reference to his new office. Our Lord addressed the apostolic body in general : " Whom do *you* say that I am ? "

The word " you " is never used in Sacred Scripture except in the plural, in the singular the word is always " thee " or " thou ". Peter then, answering for all, professed faith in Christ's divinity : " Thou art Christ the Son of the living God ". Now mark the change in Our Lord's language : " Blessed art *thou* Simon Bar-Jona . . . I say to *thee*. . . ." He no longer addresses the Apostles as a body, but in reward of Peter's faith He singles him out and to him alone He speaks. "I say to thee : that thou art Peter " or Rock. Behold his name is instantly changed from Simon to Rock. Why ? —The Apostle himself had not time to ask, Why ? when the Master followed it up by a sentence showing that this act, so far from being an empty formula, was the preliminary in the execution of a great purpose. He is about to constitute His Apostle the foundation support of His future Church. Before doing so He bestows on him a name that symbolizes his office, and with luminous directness explains the functions involved in it. " Thou art Rock, and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

A. In the language in which this sentence was originally spoken the word " Cephas " or Peter means not an ordinary rock but one whoes

base strikes deep into the earth and presents the very symbol of indestructible endurance.

Our Lord had previously explained the relation of a foundation to the building it sustains, in His parable of the two houses, one built on sand and the other on a rock. The rain and wind reduced the house built on sand to ruins while the house built upon a rock towered above the wildest storms. Why? Because of the strength it received from its foundation. This parable was fresh in the Apostles' memories when He addressed their Chief in the words quoted. Here Peter is constituted the foundation of the Church that Christ was about to raise, supporting not only the individual stones but the entire building. From the foundation the whole Church would receive stable firmness.

But what is the bond that cements the individual members into that spiritual edifice called the Church? Unity of faith allied to unity of government. St. Ambrose defines it as: "A congregation bound together by the unity of faith and charity". Now, how is this unity of faith and government to be assured unless the rock on which Christ reared His Church be itself proof against the corrosion and disintegrating influences of error. But if Peter could err

in teaching would not the Church built on Peter totter on its rotten foundation. You cannot at any time imagine an immovable building resting on a staggering foundation, but especially a building that God assures you is to derive its strength and firmness from the basement rock that supports it.

B. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

A forewarning is given here that the future holds trials and storms for which the Church must be prepared, and a promise absolute and unqualified that she shall be invincible—"They shall not prevail against her".

Now, by what more effectual method would the powers of hell prevail against her than by corrupting her faith? She accepting an admixture of falsehood and receiving mere human inventions as revealed truth? But what security has she against such a deplorable pass, if the Pope, from whom she is bound to take her teaching, is not secure against error—if he is not infallible?

C. Since Christ invested Peter with supreme authority to teach the universal Church, a corresponding obligation, as we shall presently see, rested on the faithful to follow that teaching.

But if He left Peter unprotected against error

you would have the strange spectacle of an infallible Church yoked to an erring, fallible head. What a bewildering dilemma would not the flock entrusted to such a shepherd find itself in! They cannot revolt against a head appointed by Christ, and yet that head they cannot follow, lest he lead them into error, and reduce our Lord's promise of perpetual security to a riddle.

Their perplexity might be expressed thus: We cannot leave him, yet we cannot follow him; or, in other words, we cannot march, and we dare not halt. A Church reduced to these straits of contradiction and indecision would present a curious spectacle indeed of a Divine organism. In a body so constituted where could we discover a trace of an all-wise Architect's hand?

Take then from Peter his protection of infallibility, and the Church over which Christ placed him, so far from exhibiting the character of her divine birth, would stand before the world covered with derision.

The second occasion on which our Lord conferred supreme authority on Peter was shortly after His Resurrection. The Apostles had spent the Easter octave at Jerusalem. The reunion of their body was restored on the octave day when

Christ appeared to heal the incredulity of Thomas. The time was not yet come when they should assemble at the appointed spot to receive the Spirit of Pentecost ; so seven of them returned to their native country. Once more they are by the lake suggestive of many a striking event in the past three years' history. It lies like a sapphire set in the green bosom of Galilee. The scene stirred within Peter a longing to return, for a time, to his old occupation. It might help too to kill the sad recollection of his fall that kept gnawing at his heart strings, so he said, " I go fish ". The others joined him. Through the long still night they laboured and caught nothing. They are tired, hungry, and sad. The early dawn is breaking ; under the rosy glow and above the cool shadows that were still lying on the pebbly beach there stood the figure of one they knew not. He said to them, " Children, have you any meat? " Mark the word " Children "—how touchingly tender! They answered " No ". " Cast the net on the right side of the ship." They did so, and it was instantly filled with fish. This incident awakened the memory of a similar event in the mind of John, and he whispered to Peter, " It is the Lord ". On the shore they found hot coals with a fish laid thereon, and bread ; and Christ said : " Come and dine ".

Taking bread and fish He gave to them. What loving solicitude for His little flock!

When they had dined in silence Christ then said:— Proof II.

"Simon son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him again: Simon son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him the third time: Simon son of John, lovest thou Me? And he said to Him: Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him Feed My sheep."

The metaphor employed here was familiar at the time. Ruler and ruled were constantly spoken of as shepherd and flock. Homer, whose language comes nearest to the Scripture, speaks of kings as "the shepherds of the people". St. Peter calls Christ "the Prince of shepherds" and warns pastors to "feed their flocks". The Apostle of the Gentiles at his departure from Ephesus reminds the bishops: "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops". Christ speaks of Himself as "The Good Shepherd".

Here, to Peter and his successors is committed the charge of feeding the entire flock, clergy and laity, that is, to guide, teach, and protect them. To give them the food of sound doctrine, sacraments, etc. That being so, the corresponding duty of the flock is evident—to accept that teaching.

From the day those words were uttered Catholic Christendom recognized this duty. What Rome approves, the universal Church approves. What Rome condemns the universal Church condemns. Communion with Rome has always been the touchstone of orthodoxy. "Where Peter is there is the Church." Why has there been through every age a perpetual current of questions from all parts of the world flowing to Rome? Because there all expect to find the untainted doctrine.

Now let us for a moment suppose the Pope liable to teach error and you would have him leading the entire flock, clergy and people, not into the healthy pasturage of truth but to the poison food of falsehood. Is it for this purpose Christ appointed him Chief Pastor of his flock—that he might lead them to death? Was not God bound to safeguard him in his teaching when He foresaw that the Christian world, looking on itself bound by His Own words, would

accept the teaching of the Chief Pastor He placed over it?

The last scene to which we invite your thoughts was enacted on Holy Thursday night. The first Mass is said. The lamplight falls on faces aglow with wondering love. Judas has just left them and every one felt relieved, a ghastly incubus was removed and the spirits of the little band revived.

Christ then delivered that beautiful discourse on charity, recorded by St. John. In it He rends the veil that hid His Sacred Heart, and lays bare its depths of love. It is love's triumphal song. But a sad refrain breaks through it all. At intervals His voice assumes a mournful cadence and broken fragments of sorrow drop from His lips: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you". . . . "I will come again and take you to Myself." . . . "I will not leave you orphans." . . . The whole address breathes "farewell". It is evident they are about to be separated from their Master. There is no mistaking these words. He is going to death. Peter's fears are aroused. His generous spirit is aflame; and he protests that he will die but he will not be torn from his Lord. "I will lay down my life for Thee." "I am

ready to go with Thee both unto prison and death." Christ then turned sad eyes on the poor man. Full well He knew the feeble clay of which that heart was made. He pitied the unstable spirit that prompted this rash protest. He warned him of his impending fall: "The cock shall not crow this day twice till thou deny Me thrice". This prediction of Peter's fall, however, was immediately followed up by the promise of a glorious privilege—the future indefectibility of Peter's faith. That a day would come when the heart purified of dross, and the feeble will rendered firm as an iron pillar by the fire of Pentecost, would withstand the fiercest trials. More, not only would Peter's own faith remain unshaken but he would discharge the office of confirming the faith of his brethren.

Proof III. "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have *you* that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for *thee* that *thy* faith fail not: and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 31).

This prayer for Peter's unfailing faith was absolute. It was not for Peter personally, but Peter the Head of the Church, the Prince of the Apostles. This prayer was efficacious, and Christ, knowing that it was heard, proceeds to invest him with the office of confirming his

brethren. Christ asks that Peter's faith shall not fail. Why? In order that he may confirm the faith of his brethren, strengthen and secure their faith against error.

Surely this power to confirm the faith of others against error must carry with it the privilege of infallibility, for if he himself were not free from error, and required confirming, might not his brethren say to him: "Physician heal thyself".

If the protection of infallibility did not secure the Pope against error, might it not be said that he would drag down in his fall, aye, more than a third of the stars of heaven! The defection of a single soldier is of small account, but when the field marshal, in the hollow of whose hands lie the fortunes of all, is entrapped, that army's doom is sealed. A city nourished by a thousand streams can afford to have one corrupted, but woe to that city if the fountain from which they all flow be poisoned to its depths.

### THE POPE IS INFALLIBLE.

We have conclusively established that Christ constituted Peter the rock immovable on which His Church should stand secure against all the assaults of error; that He empowered that same Peter to feed the entire flock on the wholesome pasturage of sound doctrine; and to Peter too He

entrusted the office of confirming his brethren. And we have seen that without the protection of infallibility none of these offices could Peter discharge.

Was that privilege to die when the Fisherman of Galilee stretched his arms on the cross and yielded up the ghost at Rome? Certainly not. The privilege of infallibility belonged not to the man but to the Pope. It was attached to the office and not to the person. Therefore it has lived in his successors down through the ages, and lives in his Successor to-day. A moment's reflection will make this evident.

The Church stands till the end of time, and so long as she lasts the powers of hell will never abate their fury. The weapons may vary but the fierceness of the assault will not diminish. Her enemies dare not drag into the light of the twentieth century the rusty instruments of torture that disfigured other times ; but the oppressive law, the godless school, the atheistic press and the secret society are forces to be more dreaded than the pitch cap and the prison. Yes! around that Church the waves of hell for ever lash their sleepless fury. Such being the case, the rock foundation of her security is as necessary in our own day as it was when Peter ruled at Antioch. The pastor's watchful care to feed and

guard his flock is even more needed now than when the first pope was commissioned.

What efforts are left untried to poison the sacred food of truth! What article in the whole deposit of revelation is free from truculent assault!

The press daily vomits forth the lie, the sophistry, the caricature, the jibe. The poison in its most subtle form insinuates itself into persons and places most unsuspected. The sanctuary itself is not secure against assault. The very atmosphere of our times is darkened with error.

Woe to the flock to-day if the Pastor commissioned to feed, guide, and protect it were not error-proof himself.

Peter's brethren still need his confirming hand. Ah! if two out of the chosen twelve yielded to Satan's siftings and fell, what would become of Peter's brethren when their numbers are recorded by tens of thousands, except the hand of Peter's Successor were strengthened to confirm them.

It is manifestly evident then that the protection of infallibility for the Church's Chief Pastor was as necessary in the tenth or twentieth centuries as it was in the first. Therefore it could not die with the man but should remain the sacred inheritance of his heirs.

But since the Roman Pontiffs alone have claimed to be his successors it follows that this privilege of infallibility, so essential to the Church's life, lives as strongly in Benedict XV as in Peter I, and will reside with his successors till the last pope hands up his pastoral staff.

Confirmation of Proofs.

If the Pope is not infallible, why cannot the world prove that he has erred? Here is a straight issue.

When the Vatican Council assembled to proclaim his privilege forty-five years ago, all the learning and research of Protestant and infidel Europe were brought to bear upon the subject. A living fire of criticism was focussed on the history of the Papacy. The literary world rang with the din of fervid activity. A great but perverse genius, Dr. Döllinger, supplied a very arsenal of weapons to all. Mr. Gladstone threw himself into the attack with an acrimony seldom bestowed on his political opponents. Long years had rolled by since a pope's first official pronouncement was made, and how numerous have they not been! What heresy has arisen on which the clear authoritative voice has not been heard! Those documents were before the world. Every advantage—a printing press, increased knowledge, scientific discoveries—was on the side of his

foes. The issue is now knit to a single point. Let them produce one single Papal pronouncement with a proved error. Let them discover one pope to have contradicted another, or to have contradicted a General Council, and they would make the Vatican assembly the laughing-stock of Europe. Did they succeed? If the untiring energy of a thousand able pens, and an army of great intellects could ensure success, victory was theirs ; but failure, dismal failure, was the end of all their efforts.

Errors and blemishes they did discover in popes when acting in capacities other than universal guides in faith and morals, but this only strengthens the Papal claim ; for it is by contrast with the human feebleness of Peter in his other actions that the splendour of his divine prerogative shines.

What difficulty can any Protestant have in accepting Papal Infallibility? He has already accepted far more. He believes that God inspired the four Evangelists, that is :—

1. He believes that God moved their wills to write.

2. He believes that God poured light on their intellects, by which the writer conceived exactly the work that the Holy Ghost wanted him to write ; and

3. He believes that He protected him against error.

Now, infallibility demands but a third of this, namely, security against error, without which the Evangelists' work would be of small benefit to mankind.

To place a Bible abounding in difficulties and apparent contradictions in the hands of all to draw a thousand different, conflicting meanings out of it would be to challenge God's wisdom. But when beside the voiceless Volume He places the living organ to interpret it, extending to him the same freedom from error with which He shielded the writers, then, and only then, the system is complete, and worthy of Divine authorship.

## CHAPTER III.

### TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE PAPACY.

"Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (MATT. XVI. 18).

IN the words of this text our Lord assures Peter that though the powers of darkness will gather their wildest fury to dash upon him, still he need have no fear, the gates of hell shall not prevail.

I will ask you now to accompany me up the avenue of time and see the fulfilment of this promise standing out on every page of history.

If, on the one hand, we view the almost absolute want of temporal power on the part of Peter and, on the other, the stupendous efforts made for the destruction of the Apostolic See, the most sceptical mind must recognize the fulfilment of this promise.

The bayonets of no powerful legions uphold the throne of Peter. No great European alliances make his name feared and respected, and the leagued forces of earth were never more

powerful or united than when they sought the destruction of the Papacy.

In making Rome his home and the centre of his operations, Peter, to human eyes at least, entered on a most unequal contest.

The glory and the terror of the Roman arms had filled the world. Every land was ministering to its pride; yet it was to fight that luxury, to christianize those cruel hearts and destroy that idolatrous worship so entwined around their history and their victories, that Peter directed his first efforts.

Every force at the empire's command combined to crush the despised Christians. In frenzied rage the mob cried out, "Christians to the lions". But as the highest point always attracts the thunderbolt, so, "the father of the Christians," as the Pope was called, was the object of their special fury.

During the first three centuries the tiara was but the prelude to the martyr's crown. Thirty popes poured out their blood for Christ. Five and forty were either driven from Rome or never set their feet within it.

Four times was the sword of destruction flashed above the head of Rome. Twice was she so reduced that her desolation awed her very besiegers, and there was nothing left to break

the silence in her who was once the proud mistress of empires save the howling of foxes on the Aventine.

Where is the human destiny that would receive such shocks and live? Yet, "The proudest royal house is but as yesterday compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. . . . The Papacy remains not a mere antique but full of life and youthful vigour."

We shall now begin our march up the high road of time, pausing at four different stages where we may witness in full dramatic splendour the Trials and the Triumphs of the Papacy.

First stage. The Pope and the barbarians.

The dripping sword of persecution rested in the scabbard for scarce a century when the Papacy was called upon to play a leading part in one of the most eventful dramas of human history. The old Roman empire was in decay and must eventually fall under its own unwieldy bulk if a barbarian had never lifted his hand.

But see! Out from the German and Scythian forests savage hordes are looking through hungry eyes on the bloated carcase of the tottering empire.

Wave after wave of those fiery barbarians broke over her frontiers. The Huns followed in the wake of the Goths, and the ruins that

marked the path of the destroyer were still smoking when the Vandals dashed after the Huns.

During the fifth and sixth centuries we see those dark masses rushing to lay low the pride and punish the crimes of guilty Rome.

In 453 the Huns came, warriors recruited from Hungary, Russia, and Tartary. So terrible were they that even the fierce Goths and Vandals fled before them. They were led by Attila, a man whose character embraces all our wildest conceptions of what a fierce barbarian should be. As a warrior he was like a lion breathing red fury on those on whom he turned. He called himself "the hammer of the universe" and "the scourge of God," and boasted that wherever Attila's horses trod no grass would grow.

Such was the chief that turned his greedy eyes on Italy and swore that he would carry his victorious sword to the very heart of Rome.

Like an avalanche of destruction Attila with a half million fierce savages behind him rolled over the fair face of Lombardy.

Every day brought messages of terror to Rome that Attila and the Huns were hastening to her gates.

There was no earthly power left now to stay his onward march; for the conquerors of Greece

and Carthage were long since dead and their degenerate descendants could offer poor resistance to hardy soldiers who were cradled in the snows of Russia and Hungary, who from boyhood were inured to the hardships of the camp, and whose courage was fed by the recollection of countless victories.

We might to-day be searching through ploughed fields for the ruins of that city that was once the queen of empires were she not saved by the Papacy. Like Thebes or Carthage or Babylon, the very name of Rome would have been erased from the map. In one week ten centuries of civilization would have been trampled under the hoofs of Scythian cavalry did not the fearless spirit of Pope Leo I rise superior to the darkest hour of his country's fortunes.

Clad in priestly vestments, unarmed, preceded by the Crucifix, he approached the barbarian camp.

Leo I.

The two great sovereignties—the sovereignty of the word and the sovereignity of the sword—are confronting each other. Attila and Leo I stand face to face. It was a striking picture. The fierce warrior who had trampled on the necks of kings surrounded by his barbaric legions is in the presence of the Vicar of peace whose only weapon is the cross. One breathing

the fire of destruction, the other the perfume of love and mercy.

That momentous meeting was to decide the fate of the civilized world.

The life and fortune of millions hung in the balance that hour.

Failure on the part of Leo would throw open the sluice gates to a deluge of barbarian violence such as the world never witnessed. Homes would be made desolate, virtue outraged, altars levelled, and the whole fabric of civilized society would crash into a thousand fragments under the iron truncheon of that savage chief.

But as Peter's Master marked the limits of the ocean's fury with a grain of sand, so Peter's successor commanded the barbarian wave to go thus far and no farther. The majestic aspect, the pressing and eloquence of Leo excited the veneration of the barbarian and induced him to strike his tents and turn his face towards the Alps. The sword bowed before the superior majesty of the cross.

Explaining his action, afterwards, to his astonished officers, Attila said, "I yielded not so much to the father of the Christians, but at each side of him I saw the Apostles Peter and Paul standing with drawn swords threatening me if I dared to march on Rome".

Thus did Rome—and Rome then stood for the world's civilization—owe its life to the great Leo. To him might be given the eulogy bestowed by Gibbon on another Leo.

"He was a born Roman, a Roman the great Julius would be proud to acknowledge. The courage of the first ages of the republic glowed within his breast, and amidst the ruins of his country he stood erect like one of those firm and lofty columns that raise their heads above the desolation of the forum."

Did the triumph of the Papacy pause here? No. The Papacy conquered the conqueror. Like the spent waves that leave ripple ridges on the shore, each barbarian tide left thousands behind in Italy. They were baptized, they accepted the Church's message and they cleaved to the soil.

Mark the result. As the richest vines spring from the very lava that once swept life in its fiery breath, and as the fairest cornfields wave above those plains over which the Nile rolled; so, through the influence of the Papacy, those men whose very names carried terror to Italy were transformed into brave and docile sons of the Church.

Out of the very elements of destruction Peter moulded the Europe of mediæval times—the

Europe of the crusaders with their martial ardour, their heroic chivalry and tender devotion.

But his conquest was not yet complete. Through his missionaries he pursued them to their huts by the Rhine and Danube.

Thus the conquerors of imperial Rome became the obedient sons of papal Rome, and the wild shout of onslaught gradually faded into the matin song of the monk and the virgin's vesper hymn.

The second stage. The Papacy and Royal Tyranny, 1085.

We now move up to our second halting-place on the high-road of history and see the Papacy in deadly grip with kingly encroachments.

Europe of the eleventh century had not outgrown its barbarism. The old leaven was still strong; despotic kings, turbulent nobles, degraded serfs. Out of the process of transformation disorders sprung that required a strong reforming hand. Simony within the Church and royal usurpation outside.

Let us have a clear notion of how matters stood.

Kings and nobles gave endowments of land to parishes and bishoprics.

Now according to the feudal custom when a man received possession of this land, as a symbol

of that property the lord presented him with a sod of the soil and a twig—types of the land and its fruits.

But when a bishop received his land from a king or chieftain, instead of investing him with the sod and twig, he was invested with the symbols of his spiritual authority—the ring and crozier.

From this custom the temporal chiefs easily persuaded themselves that not only the lands but the ecclesiastical office itself was theirs to bestow on whom they chose. Here you have the root evil from which a thousand disorders sprung. Watch how it worked out in practice.

Nobles ambitious to secure rich benefices and hold the revenues in their families obtained ordination for their younger sons, who so far from abandoning the secular world and preparing for the sacred ministry by a long course of study and exercises of piety, continued to live with their brothers in the chase, the court, or the battle-field. The vices that flourished in such careers remained unchecked—strange material from which to form the monk or the priest!

Kings, hard pressed for money, little scrupled to hold ecclesiastical offices up to the highest bidder or the largest bribe, or reward the favourite of the camp or court.

Thus the freedom of ecclesiastical appointments

became annihilated, and the selection of a bishop or abbot became the privilege of the layman. Naturally disorders became inevitable.

When a church office became vacant wealthy competitors jostled each other, and the position went not to the life of purest virtue or the man of most conspicuous ability, but to the heaviest purse.

The more disorders multiplied within the Church the tighter became the grip of secular encroachment from without. The civil arm was thrust in, till the heart of the Church was held in the mailed grasp of the robber-noble or despot king. It seemed as if Christ was asleep while the vessel of His Church was tossed among the rocks and breakers.

Should a temporal kingdom fall into such disorders its doom was sealed, for within itself there would be no fulcrum or foothold found from which to build up. Within the kingdom of Christ it is different. A day of great awaking was at hand. These scandals and disorders lay where scum and weeds generally lie—on the surface. All this while there were precious gems lying at the bottom. Scattered here and there were groups of holy men, who though few in number were a great moral force. It was the age of Anselm, Lanfranc, Wolstan, and Peter Damien.

Within the Church was a soul that was slowly but surely awaking, and asserted itself through the life of one of the most fearless champions of reform the world ever saw—Gregory VII, Hildebrand.

Hildebrand.

He dwelt in a Roman monastery, and from the shade of his cowl his eagle glance penetrated the multiplied evils in every land, and the heart within him burned. He had served under four popes, and every year saw him rise higher in public estimation. Honours, so far from causing him to relax, only increased the rigor of his monastic austerities.

A mind of crystal clearness, a will of inflexible firmness, and a courage that quailed before no difficulty.

The two ideals that ever burned before his mind :—

1. To restore to the sanctuary a purified clergy—men in whose lives Christ would walk the earth once more.

2. To strike off the arm of secular encroachment that was strangling the Church's freedom.

The Church of Christ, he cried, must be pure but she must be also free. Not only must she stand before the world without a blemish but she must also stand without a fetter. She must show herself the spotless spouse of Christ, but the

spouse of Christ not chained to the chariot wheels of every petty Cæsar. These were the two goals of his life-long dream.

When the throne of Peter became vacant the acclamations of the clergy and people proclaimed Hildebrand Pope.

He is now placed where he can carry out the twofold ambition of his life.

The tiara was scarcely placed upon his brow when he began a war against vice within and tyranny without that seemed well-nigh madness.

He published a decree excommunicating all clergy who would receive or who had received their livings through simony. It touched thousands to the quick, laity as well as clergy, for if the clergy could not buy the laity could not sell. There was not a crowned head in Europe but whose interest it was to defeat him. It aroused a tempest of the wildest fury. "I am beaten," he says, "by a thousand storms, my life is one prolonged agony."

Henry IV.

The Papacy stood alone against the world in arms. The conflict was brought to an issue by Henry IV of Germany.

His exactions drove his Saxon subjects to rebellion. Sixty thousand took the field. Henry triumphed. Flushed with victory he turned his arms against the Apostolic See. The contest

heightens. The Papacy and the powers of darkness are locked in deadly embrace. The emperor trampled on the Pope's decree, invested his creatures with ring and crozier, and publicly sold benefices.

The Pope remonstrated with fatherly kindness. The monarch replied by calling a mock council of excommunicated men who passed a decree deposing Hildebrand.

The struggle now reaches its crucial point.

If the Pope for a moment wavered all was lost. Should the German emperor triumph in that struggle what was to follow? the Church would be chained hand and foot to the caprice of every despot, reduced to the position of a pet magpie with clipped wings, the plaything of the state. If the Pope receded an inch the barriers would fall down and an inrush of vice and simony would invade the sanctuary. He must strike hard, for all was now knit in the one question: Shall the Church of God live free, or throttled by the secular arm?

Hildebrand was not the man to quail. He excommunicated Henry.

The bolt was sped, and the hand of God followed that of His Vicar and dealt terribly with those who opposed him.

The man who at the mock council issued his

deposition was seized with a fatal illness and died in despair. At the moment of his death lightning struck his palace and that of the emperor whose instrument he was.

The emperor's terrified adherents stole over the Alps in groups to beg the Pope's forgiveness. His nobles, the very servants of his household, abandoned him as a man doomed to God's wrath.

A spirit of compunction seized the monarch and he set out in a winter of unparalleled severity to beg absolution. With one solitary attendant accompanied by his wife and child he climbed the snowy heights of the Alps through blizzards and freezing winds. He crept down the other side on his hands and knees. Thus did the sacrilegious monarch hasten for forgiveness to the dauntless old man who stood like a rock in mid-ocean bared and lashed by the wild furies of the tempest that his trumpet of reform had aroused.

Canossa.

The Pope was at the Castle of Canossa. Henry, stripped of every badge of royalty, in the coarse garb of penance, barefoot in the winter snows, spent three days on the ramparts. On the fourth day he is admitted to an audience, is reconciled and absolved. But his repentance was of short duration. Wounded pride reasserted it-

self. He crossed the Alps once more, this time not as a penitent but at the head of a powerful army. He besieged and sacked Rome. The great Pontiff retired to Salerno. The city of his love was in flames. The moderation of Goth and Vandal was shamed by the fury of a Christian army.

The lion heart that for twelve years had battled against vice was torn with anguish and is about to beat its last. Turning to his attendants he exclaimed: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile".

But like his Divine Master the darkest hour marked the triumph of his cause.

The two ideals of his life were accomplished. Vice fled the sanctuary. A purified clergy ministered at the altar, and the grasp of civil encroachment was broken for ever.

From the tomb of Gregory the Papacy arose not shorn of its ancient splendour but strong, vigorous, and triumphant.

The third stage. The Battle of Lepanto saves Europe, 1571.

We now once more move upwards on history's high-road and take our stand in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. We look out and see! An ominous cloud of destruction hangs above Europe—the threatened danger of the absolute supremacy of the Turk.

For more than a thousand years the Ottoman power kept swelling, adding conquest to conquest. Tartar hordes from the North rolled down in waves over the Eastern world, and wherever their flag cast its shadow a blight fell. Untold barbarities and desolation marked their march. Civilization withered in their dark presence.

Asia Minor, once the granary of the world and the home of arts, was turned into a desert. His conquest of the East was complete when, a hundred years previously, the last remnant of what was once the Roman Empire fell before him. Constantinople, the key that opened the west to the east, became his (1453).

With the eastern world at his feet, entrenched in the capital of the great Constantine, his power quickly shot over Servia, Bulgaria, and Macedonia.

Flushed with victory, standing on these newly conquered lands he saw but a small ribbon of water separating him from the choicest portion of Europe, and a new field of glory unfolded itself before the eyes of his ambition's dream. The conquest of the western world would now make him master of the universe.

It was a dazzling project. Small wonder if in vision he already saw his sacred banners floating from the spires of the European capitals and the

swarthy sons of the desert dictating terms to conquered Christendom. The state of Europe just then offered a golden opportunity. It was tossing in the welter of religious confusion that followed in the wake of the Reformation. Here was the chance for the children of Mohammed. Their legions were countless, their scimitars sharp, and, already conquerors of half the world, they believed themselves invincible. In the name of Allah and the prophet this was the hour to strike.

This ambitious project soon emerged from the region of dreams and solidified into hard fact. The crescent flag began to flutter over the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, the boom of Turkish guns rolled along the Italian coasts, swarms of turbaned savages might any day come pouring into the streets of London or Vienna, and the boast of one of their sultans (Bajagget) be realized when he said he would feed his horse from a bushel of oats off the altar of St. Peter's. With this war cloud hanging over her now what effort did Europe make to save herself? One eye alone kept faithful watch, and one clarion voice alone rang through Christendom calling on the chivalry of Europe to rise and meet the common foe. That voice was the Pope's.

Pius V is the last of the canonized popes. In early years he was a Dominican friar; he carried

Pius V.

to the throne of Peter the habits of austere piety and incessant prayer.

He sent urgent appeals to every court in Christendom, yet though Europe was quaking with terror and every day brought tales of Turkish barbarities that chilled the blood the voice of bigotry rose higher even than the cry of self-preservation ; and England, Russia, and Germany were prepared to see the swarthy hordes masters of London and St. Petersburg and Berlin rather than listen to the Pope when he asked them to hurl back the dark curse that threatened to quench the light of Christian civilization.

Two powers alone answered to their father's call—the little republic of Venice and ever faithful Spain.

Between these the Pope could muster but twenty thousand soldiers and a hundred small vessels. The Mohammedans outnumbered them in ships and men by three to one. But to supply the want of arms Pius, like another Moses, stormed heaven with prayer, and prayer won the battle.

Don John.

Don John of Austria, half brother to the king of Spain, was appointed high admiral. He sailed in search of the Turkish fleet and he found it lying off southern Italy in the Gulf of Lepanto on the first Sunday of October, 1571. The

scene was striking. The Ionian Islands whose thousand beauties were lighted up by the autumn sun rose behind the Christian fleet.

The banner of St. Peter is floating from every mast. In the prow of the admiral's ship is a huge statue of the Blessed Virgin, while hymns of Mary rose and fell over the sunlit waters.

Crucifix in hand, Don John rowed from vessel to vessel exhorting soldiers and generals to show themselves worthy of the sacred cause for which they fought. It was a thrilling spectacle. Four hundred vessels of war are confronting each other. Two worlds—the east and the west—are looking into each other's faces. The last bulwark of Europe's freedom—the chivalry of the crusaders—is about to measure swords with the terrible Turk.

The world looked on and held its breath. Terrible issues are at stake. Before the setting sun shall sink into the blue Mediterranean either Europe will be under the heel of the Moslem conqueror or his power smashed for ever. The two fleets pause to survey each other and then the signal is given for battle by Don John hanging out from the ship a picture of the Crucifixion. The soldiers fall on their knees in prayer, then blessing themselves they rush with a wild cry of joy upon the Turks. Vengeance for the cruel-

ties of a thousand years hung upon their swords that day.

Lepanto.

For three hours the battle raged and the smoke darkened the heavens. Though the Mohammedans were vastly superior in numbers, out of three hundred and thirty ships fifty alone escaped, and thirty thousand turbaned heads went down.

But better still was the moral effect. The Mohammedans looked on themselves as unconquerable. That day the spell was broken ; their prestige for ever vanished. For over a hundred years Christendom was quaking, but from the waters of Lepanto Pius V bid craven Europe pluck up its courage, since the chivalry of the crusaders was living still. From the high sanctuary of heaven their spirits looked down and rejoiced, their glorious work was crowned and the dread power received a blow from which it never recovered.

On that same day—the first Sunday of October, 1571—the procession of the rosary was pouring forth at Rome when the sainted Pope, looking up to the heavens, paused and turning to the cardinals said : " A truce to our business ; our great work now is to return thanks to God for the great victory He has given to the Christian arms ".

A few days afterwards the news of Lepanto came to Rome, and told that at the very hour Pius uttered those words the Turkish power received its death-blow. In thanksgiving for that memorable victory the Pope added the title "Help of Christians" to the Litany of Our Lady, and dedicated the first Sunday of October to the Queen of the Rosary.

Once more Europe owed its civilization to the Papacy.

Lepanto, Lepanto! sent a thrill through every Christian heart. From that day the nightmare vanished; the danger of Mohammedan invasion no longer disturbed the repose of Europe. The destruction of the Turkish power in our own time is but the completion of the glorious blow struck by the Papal army in the Gulf of Lepanto.

Fourth stage. The Pope and Napoleon, 1806.

We now approach our final stage. The light of our own day is breaking over the last fierce assault on the institution of the Papacy. Never since Pentecost was witnessed a more gloomy epoch than that which marked the closing years of the eighteenth century. The apostles of infidelity were busy. The poisonous seed was cast far and wide. The ablest pens and richest intellects were enlisted in the anti-Christian crusade. Scoff and ridicule, brilliant prose and

thrilling verse, were pointed against the most cherished Christian truths. The new infidelity penetrated to the palace and the cabin. Statesmen leagued to carry out the teaching of the encyclopedist philosophers. Statesmen, philosophers, ribald journalists, secret societies, all had one common goal, one aim—the Papacy. The oppressive law, the wit, the lie, the caricature met at one centre point—Christ's Vicar. Society was loosened. It was the hour of the powers of darkness. On every side were ominous portents of a social earthquake that would convulse mankind. It burst in the French Revolution.

French Revolution.

The world was torn in fragments and the proudest institutions whirled in the vortex of seething anarchy. Bishops and priests were butchered at the guillotine or sent to die of hunger on abandoned hulks. The bells were silent, the church doors closed, the shrines plundered, the silver crucifixes melted down, religious communities were thrown upon the world ; buffoons in copes and surplices danced through the streets.

Raging in a frenzy of blasphemy the citizens of Paris enthroned on the high altar of Notre Dame an abandoned woman, swung censers before her, and crowned her as the goddess of reason.

A new scene opens on the drama of wickedness.

Napoleon led his soldiers to the summit of the Alps, and turning the point of his sword towards Italy, spoke those remarkable words: "Soldiers, you are ill-fed and badly clothed; the Directory owes you much but can pay you nothing; behold this fair land, it is yours". Napoleon.

Like an avalanche they swept over the plains of Lombardy, crowned themselves with fresh laurels at Marengo, and once more the tread of the spoiler awakened the echoes of Old Rome. A deluge of ribald licence invaded the city. The blare of trumpets and the tramp of cavalry resounded through her most sacred fanes. The waves of psalmody were hushed, and the air was laden with jeer and blasphemy. The tricolor floated over St. Angelo, and the tree of liberty was planted before St. Peter's. Nor was the person of the Holy Father spared. Before the grey dawn of the winter's morning broke, the soldiers burst into the oratory of Pius VI. Here they beheld a scene that might well touch the hardest hearts. The venerable Head of Christendom with the weight of eighty years upon him praying for God's afflicted Church. Did they pause before that touching spectacle? Alas! the devil had trampled every spark of humanity out of their hearts. The Pope was

made a prisoner. His apartments were rifled before his eyes. The ring of the fisherman was torn from his finger. He was hustled into the streets with a brutal roughness spared to the tramp or burglar. Though the hand of death was upon him he was dragged by forced marches over the Alps. He died like his divine Master with a prayer of forgiveness on his lips.

It seemed as if the end of the Papacy had come. The Pope dead in infidel hands, the cardinals dispersed and seeking shelter under the hated shadow of the crescent; venerable ecclesiastics living on alms in foreign countries, the victorious infidel holding high revel in the Holy City. What wonder the vaults of hell rang with triumphant glee, and the agents of darkness on earth rubbed their hands with delight that they had seen the end.

The trials of the Papacy did not end here. The fugitive cardinals met at Venice and elected Pius VII. The Pope is once more at Rome—but to take up his cross. Napoleon endeavoured to make him the pliant instrument of his own ambition. But the man at whose nod the most powerful trembled is withstood by Peter. He hurls excommunication on that sacrilegious head. The second Pope is now a prisoner.

From that fatal hour an eclipse began to over-

spread the sun of the emperor's glory. He forgot that there is One above Who said, "Touch not My anointed ones, for if you touch them you touch the apple of My eye". At the head of a grand army of almost half a million he marched upon Russia—with the result you know. His glory expired in the tragic terrors of that retreat. Heaven and earth were armed against him. When he heard of his excommunication he had sneeringly asked, "Does the Pope think that the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers?" No, they are torn from their grasp by famine and cold. Their frost-bitten ears and fingers dropped off. Their lines staggered under the paralysis of winter, and the stark corpses of his glorious army were flung like the links of a broken chain across the snows of Europe.

Fierce drama hurrying to a close.

He fell; the eagle whose ambition all Europe could not satisfy had to beat out his proud heart on a rocky island speck. The fabric of his conquest melted, and his name and race have ceased to live.

The nation by whose arms he despoiled the Pope was made to tread the wine press of sorrow and drink defeat. And it is a marvellous coincidence that on the very day the French guards abandoned Pius IX to Garibaldi's mob, on that

very day their country's glory was crushed on the fields of Sedan.

Last glance.

Here our journey ends. We have travelled along the avenue of time. We now stand on the fringes of two thousand years, and looking back, what a glorious spectacle do not the trials and the triumphs of the Papacy afford!

We have seen wave after wave dash itself against the rock. They dissolve, melt and vanish, but the rock remains.

Peter surveys the present.

Sitting calmly in his boat to-day, Peter looks out upon the present. He sees kingdoms rising and new empires spring up in lands undiscovered when Attila's power was flung over the earth like a shadow. He sees old nations with foundations corroded by false principles and anti-Christian teaching, proud empires broken and tossed like foam before the wind.

Peter looks into the future and sees dark storms rising and gloomy portents appearing above the surface. The hoarse roar of coming revolutions and the fierce gusts of anarchy and socialism threatening.

And Peter has no fear, for over all walks the Lord, and Peter clasps His hand. Peter has no fear not only because God upholds him to-day, but because his mind goes back to a scene in a Galilean valley in far off Cæsarea Philippi when

the tall mountains cast their evening shadows, when the stillness of the valley was stirred by words that fell from lips Divine, and when upon his ears the promise broke—the promise that every page of history makes true.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

## EPILOGUE.

The path of reason by which our anxious inquirer was led into the Catholic Church was not only "The Straight Path" but the solid one too. The firm ground of unshaken logic was under his foot at every step. He was asked to take nothing for granted. His credulity, passions, or emotions were never once appealed to. His reason and his Bible alone were his only guides; yet each conclusion was arrived at by methods as direct and convincing as those employed to establish a proposition in Euclid.

His submission then to the One Church founded by Christ—a Church producing such credentials for her authority—so far from being an impulse of blind caprice, was the only course open to a reasonable man anxious for his soul's salvation.

To reject claims so evident and convincing would be to close his eyes to the noonday sun, to sink back into darkness, scepticism, and, perhaps, despair.

He knows much about the Catholic Church now, but for many a year every day will teach him more. Time will make all things clear.

While outside her threshold, many of her doctrines and customs seemed strange and inexplicable. He was then like a man judging a stained-glass window from the wrong side. The figures appear blurred and the outlines meaningless. Let him look at the same window from the right side when the sun fills it, and lo! what a change, what definite order, what grace in outline, what skilful grouping, what variety of shade and richness of colour! At a glance a world of harmonized beauty is revealed. Every colour, pose, feature and expression is instinct with life, eloquent with meaning. Yet all this was hidden from the eye of the outside gazer. So, to acquire a complete knowledge of the Church's teaching, devotions and practices, she must be viewed from within.

The frozen medium of hostile criticism is a cheat. It is only when looked at through the warm light of filial love that the mists of prejudice dissolve, and the full beauty and purpose of her life can be fully seen and appreciated. Corroding anxiety will die, serene peace will fill and possess his life. The clamouring bells of contradictory churches need no longer disturb

the calm serenity of his soul. And as years roll by he can look back and say with Newman: "From the time I became a Catholic I have had no anxiety of heart. I have been in perfect peace and contentment. I never have had one doubt. *It was like coming into port after a rough sea*, and my happiness on that score remains to this day without interruption." *

* "Apologia," p. 238.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, ABERDEEN

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